



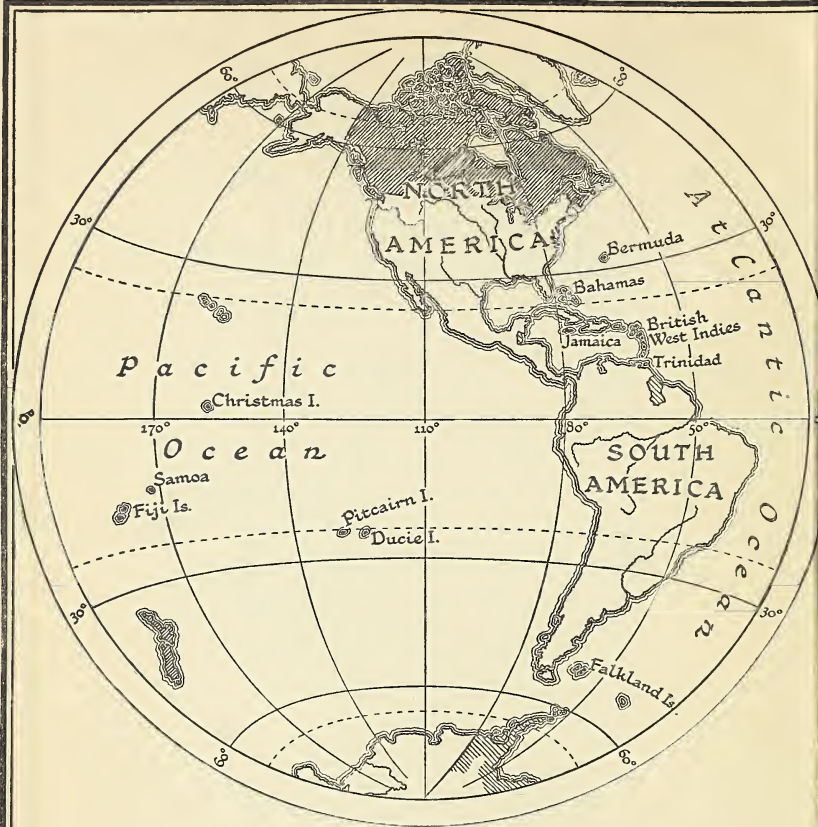
HISTORY

SECOND SERIES

Editor: C. B. Firth

CURRICULUM

BOOK FOUR



THE BRITISH



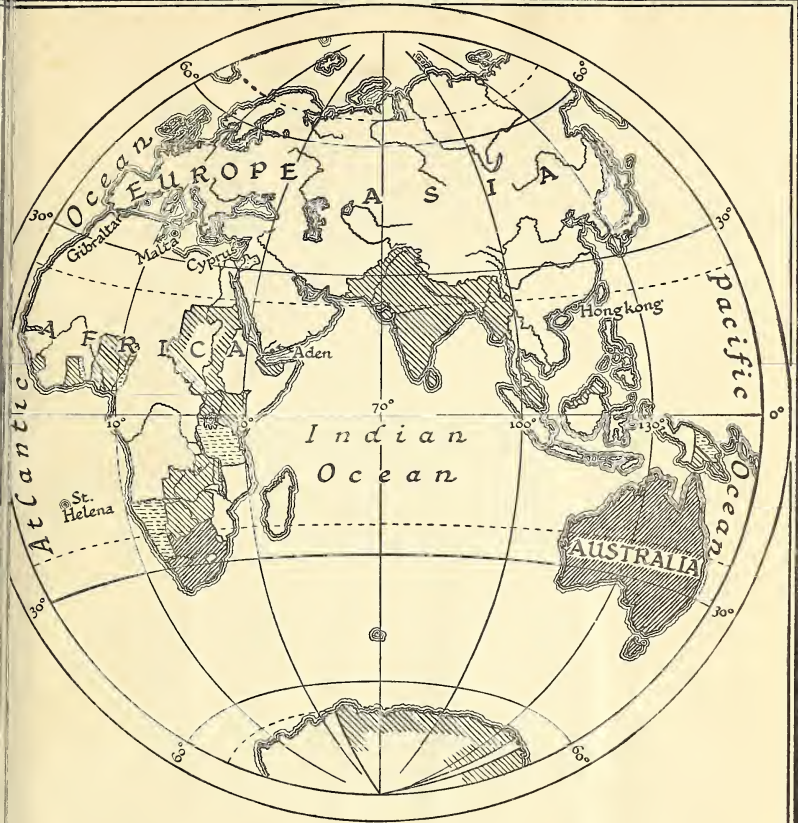
Dominions



*India & Colonial
territories*



*Mandated
territories*



EMPIRE in 1939

(This map is drawn on Lambert's Equal-area Azimuthal Projection)

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HISTORY

SECOND SERIES

EDITOR: CATHERINE B. FIRTH

BOOK FOUR

THE GROWTH OF BRITISH DEMOCRACY

PART ONE AT HOME

by C. B. Firth

PART TWO OVERSEAS

by L. F. Horsfall

**RECOMMENDED FOR USE
IN ALBERTA SCHOOLS**

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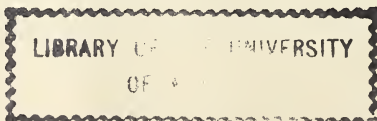
Revised Edition 1949

Part Two first published 1949

Revised Edition 1953

055311

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY R. & R. CLARK, LTD., EDINBURGH



PREFACE

ONE use of all school work is to help people to try to understand themselves. But to understand yourself you must know the world in which you live, and to know the world in which you live you must understand how it has come to be. History tells about the work of our fathers and grandfathers and of their fathers and grandfathers before them, and the work of all our ancestors has made our world what it is. The men and women of the past were as eagerly alive as we are. They had the same fundamental problems to face, and the way in which they faced them has determined the conditions in which we face them to-day.

The six books of *History* (Second Series) explain certain facts in the world in which British people live now. Each book is intended for the work of a year, and each of the first four is divided into two parts. The best explanation of the circumstances of modern life is gained by studying all these eight parts, as well as Book Five and the three parts of Book Six, but each part and book is independent of the rest. A simple Introductory Book links the Second with the First Series.

Second Series Book One tells the story of the British Commonwealth. The first part goes only to the end of the eighteenth century, so in this book anyone who can read only one part is advised to choose Part II, which carries the story on to 1947.

Book Two is about ancient civilizations. It tells of the people who lived by the Euphrates and the Nile, for they first used the things which we take so much for granted that we do not ask questions about them. Part II tells of the Greeks and Romans on whose civilisations our own is founded.

Book Three explains in Part I the growth of the Christian Church, from St. Paul's time to that of the missionaries of to-day. Part II is

about the difference in ordinary life which modern science has made, so it only covers some two hundred years.

Book Four shows in Part I how our love of managing our own affairs was expressed in ways of government from Norman times to 1939, when the second World War began. Part II tells how British ideas were carried out or modified in the Commonwealth and Empire to the year 1953. Since the end of the second World War great changes have been going on. Boys and girls who hope, after they leave school, to take their share wisely in public life need to know the story of the earlier struggles towards democracy, at home and overseas.

Book Five sketches the history of Europe from the beginning of the French Revolution to the end of the second World War. Without a knowledge of the past of different countries no one can understand the reasons for their different characters and ways of life to-day.

Book Six (in two volumes) tells British readers about great Powers whose land, or some of it, is outside Europe. The complicated problems of the modern world demand some study of the history of China, Russia, and America.

The books are for silent reading. In the corresponding Teachers' Books, among other things, suggestions are made for further work which pupils themselves can do, and ways are discussed by which the series may be adapted to the needs of different schools.

I wish here to express my thanks to the authors and publishers who have kindly given their permission for the use of several short quotations, particulars of which will be found in the Teachers' Book. My gratitude to the creator of the diagrams in Books Four and Five will without doubt be shared by all who teach and all who learn.

CATHERINE B. FIRTH

APPLEGARTH, CHALFONT ST. PETER
February 1948

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The British Empire in 1939	<i>front endpaper</i>
The British Empire at the end of 1947	<i>back endpaper</i>

Part One

BRITISH DEMOCRACY AT HOME

by

CATHERINE B. FIRTH



Number 10 Downing Street

PART ONE

BRITISH DEMOCRACY AT HOME

Chapter I

The character of Englishmen

EIGHT bay horses were drawing the state coach down Whitehall. The wide street runs from Trafalgar Square to Westminster; tall buildings stand on each side. The pavements were crowded with men, women, and children. Well-trained horses, ridden by policemen, gently kept the people from surging forward on to the road in their eagerness to see the procession. The king was driving from Buckingham Palace to the Houses of Parliament in Westminster. He was going to open a parliament which had been elected a few weeks before. For more than six hundred years it has been part of the work of an English king to summon and open parliaments.

Much that is done by the kings and people of England has been done by their grandfathers and great-grandfathers for hundreds of years. Other countries often make violent changes, as France did in 1789 and Russia in 1917. At the end of the first World War in 1918 Germany became a republic, and in 1931 the Spanish people

decided that they no longer wanted a king. In England too there were changes between the two World Wars—the second ended in 1945—but it has always been our custom to make changes gradually. Often we “alter things and leave their names unaltered”, as though we were trying to hide the changes from ourselves.

Most Englishmen dislike changes, both in small things and big. Boys and girls feel indignant if they are told that tea will be at five-thirty instead of five; they say, “But we always have it at five”. They would be angry if someone announced that they must come to school on Saturday and on Tuesday stay away. Older people often say, “It was not so when I was a boy”; and they usually mean, “I do not like these changes”. English manufacturers find it hard to believe that the goods which have always been made by their firms may not be the goods needed now. It was difficult, for example, for the owners of cotton mills to understand the changes which came to their industry through the use of artificial silk. It was difficult, too, for the directors of railway companies to adapt their ideas to the use of motor-coaches. It was difficult long ago for the kings of England to work out their own position when Englishmen began to insist that they should all have a share in choosing people to govern them.

Most Englishmen are interested in the way in which they are governed, and we have always wanted to manage our own affairs for ourselves. We do not like being told what we ought to do, and we grow hot with anger if we are asked to pay taxes which we think are unfair. An

Englishman of to-day would disagree with an Englishman of, say, six hundred years ago about a great many subjects—our friendship with France, for example, and the best way of dyeing cloth—but they would have no difference of opinion at all about the badness of men who asked them to pay more than they thought they should. For hundreds of years a love of independence has been part of the English character; for hundreds of years Englishmen have been learning to make and to carry out their own decisions. Slowly, because they disliked change, and steadily, because they could not bear interference, they worked out a plan of government which gave them more independence than the people of any other great modern country had had before the French Revolution.

England was the first modern country in which the power of actual governing passed from the hands of the king to the hands of men chosen by the mass of the people. Yet England is one of the very few great countries to-day which still has a king. America, France, Russia, each has its national song, but no schoolboy in one of those countries sings "God save the king"; in no one of them can coins or stamps bear the king's image. An American boy has never felt the pleasure which English children feel when they see the king. Americans, like Englishmen, love independence, and they think it strange that Englishmen combine independence with loyalty to the king. They are loyal to the stars and stripes which stand for their country. To most Englishmen, the king stands for England, and loyalty to king and to country are one.

THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT

(A) In Schools

Making Rules



Headmaster
and Staff

Seeing that rules
are carried out



Prefects

Bringing delinquents
to justice



Headmaster

(B) In Britain

Legislation



Parliament
(The legislature)

Administration



Government
Departments

Home Office
Ministry of
Education
Ministry of
Health
and others

Jurisdiction



Judges in Law Courts.
(The Judiciary)

Loyalty to the king, love of independence, and dislike of change are characteristic of Englishmen and all three characteristics help to explain the particular way of being governed which we have worked out for ourselves. We have also a fourth characteristic: we like order. This is one reason why we are interested in methods of government, for without government there cannot be order. Wherever a number of people live or work or play together there must be government of some kind. A school or a factory, a town or a football club, must have its rules; without them no one would know what to do, and the weaker people would have no independence, for others would interfere with them. It sounds contradictory but it is true that without government people who live in a group are not free. Englishmen and Americans think that one of the aims of good government is to make it possible for everyone to find his own special work and to do it to the best of his powers.

If government is necessary in every group of people, then there must be someone to make the laws, someone to see that they are explained and obeyed, and someone to decide what shall be done if they are broken. In some schools the head master or mistress makes the rules, the prefects see that they are carried out, and the masters and mistresses punish the children who disobey. In other schools the work is differently divided. Sometimes rules are made by an elected committee. Sometimes the prefects are chosen by the headmaster or by the teachers, and sometimes each class elects its own prefects. There may

be one prefect only for a class, or there may be a number of monitors, one for the ink, perhaps, and one each for the windows, the flowers, and the blackboard. The work of government is differently arranged in different schools, but always there is someone to make the rules, someone to see that they are carried out, and someone who decides what shall be done if they are broken.

The rules are of different kinds. A time-table is a kind of rule, and so is the list of the hours at which different classes may go to the playing-fields. Some schools have rules about borrowing library books or speaking in passages. Even schools which work with as few rules as possible must have plans for beginning and ending terms. A great deal of time is spent by people who belong to a school in matters concerned with its government.

The government of a country is still more difficult. The number of people is larger, their interests are wider; their wishes are more varied, their problems more complicated. But at bottom the business of government is always the same: there must be someone to make the laws, someone to see that they are carried out, and someone to decide what shall be done if they are broken. Just as schools rule themselves in different ways, so countries have worked out different kinds of government.

Englishmen have been working out their own kind or form of government for centuries. Because we dislike change we have had no violent revolutions; because we love independence we have struggled to find ways of ruling ourselves; because we are loyal to the king we have

discovered a way by which we honour and are not asked to obey him. We like to see the king drive down Whitehall to open the parliament which we have elected. The tall buildings there are filled with offices in which plans are made for carrying out the laws. In a street which opens from Whitehall, called Downing Street, stands the house of the prime minister; he is the most important man in the English form of government.

The form of government which a country has is called its constitution. The English constitution is a strange mixture of old and new. It may be compared with a house to which one man has added extra chimneys while another has built a new wing; or with a warm patchwork quilt on to which different people have sewn patches of silk or cotton, round patches and square patches, patches of red, blue, and yellow. But neither of these comparisons is quite just, for the English constitution seems like a living thing, able to change itself as the centuries changed and the people who lived in them. It has not finished changing yet.

Note. The word English is here used in the same sense as when we speak of English literature. Readers who live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland may, if they like, change English and England to British and Britain in this book wherever they are sure that that would be correct.

Chapter II

How William the Conqueror governed

At midwinter William the Conqueror wore his crown at Gloucester. There, in the chapter house of the monastery, he had deep speech with his men. The chapter house is still standing; anyone who goes to the cathedral can reach it by walking along the cloisters past the place where the monks used to wash their hands. It is still used for meetings. The bishop of Gloucester and his clergy meet there to discuss their work as once the abbot and his monks discussed theirs; but the king does not summon great men to meet him at Gloucester now, as William the Conqueror used to do once a year. There was great excitement among the monks when he came, and no little anxiety, for William, as people who knew him wrote, was dignified, and "so very stern was he also and hot, that no man durst do anything against his will".

To the king came rich men from all over the country, "archbishops and bishops, abbots and earls, thanes and knights"; all the people, that is, who held their lands from the king himself, or at least as many of them as dared not refuse to face the journey on horseback with their servants, over roads which were little more than beaten-down tracks. Three times a year he summoned them, at Easter to Winchester, the town which Alfred the Great, nearly two hundred years earlier, had made his capital;

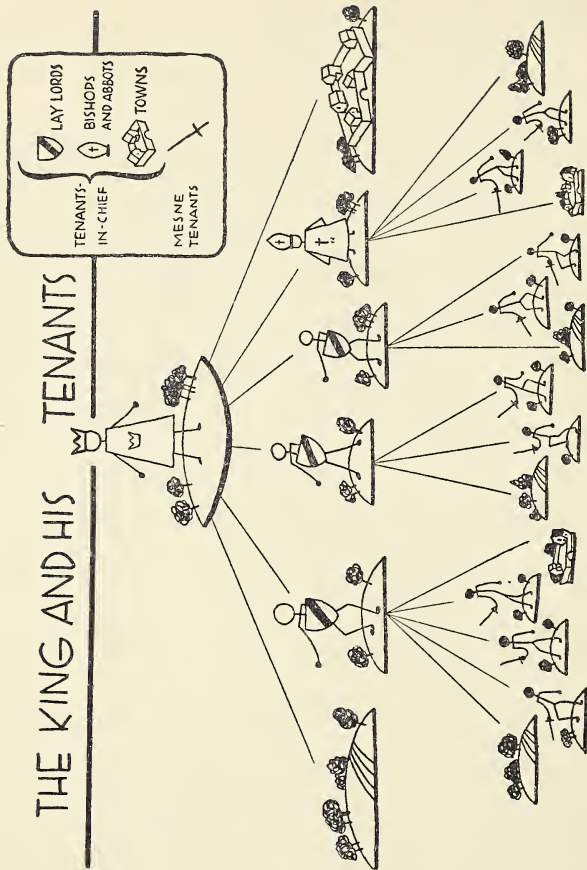
at Pentecost, that is, Whitsunday, to Westminster, to the great monastery which had been lately built; and at Christmas to Gloucester. And, doubtless with many a grumble, they came.

For in 1066 William had won the battle of Hastings and had set out to conquer England. Many of the land-owners of England had been slain in the battle, fighting for Harold, their king; other Englishmen, like Hereward the Wake, had held out for a time; but William had beaten them, and the land of England was his. Some he kept for his own use and the rest he lent to the men who had followed him from Normandy. English bishops and abbots who had ruled over land belonging to cathedrals and monasteries were replaced by Normans. In return for the use of lands, men had to fight for the king when he called them, to pay him money on certain occasions when he demanded it, and to come when he summoned them to his court. When they did homage for their lands and swore to be true men of the king, they implied that they made these three promises. If they broke them the king might take away their lands, and it was by their lands that they lived.

The great men who came to have deep speech with the king were none of them traders or manufacturers. Land was the chief source of wealth, and the richest men were those who held most. Some they cultivated for their own use and some they lent to other men in much the same way as the king had lent them what they themselves held. According to the theory of the time, the king alone really

THE KING AND HIS

TENANTS



owned land; all other land, directly or indirectly, was held from him, and holders of land were called tenants. In Norman-French, the language which William spoke, the word for *to hold* is *tenir*. The men who held land straight from the king himself were called tenants-in-chief. It was they whom William summoned to meet him at Gloucester.

In the year 1085 the special subject of talk was "this land, as to how and by what manner of men it was inhabited". William had heard that enemies threatened the country and he knew that money would be needed for its defence. So he wanted to be sure about the wealth of all people in England. His tenants-in-chief could tell him about their own lands but they did not know everything about their tenants (the *mesne*—pronounced *mean*—tenants), and perhaps William thought that they were unwilling to say what they knew. So it was agreed to make a survey of all the land. Royal messengers went out to every village to ask questions from the men on the spot, and the information they gathered was afterwards written in a manuscript which was later called Domesday Book. It is still taken care of in London. "So diligently did [William] have the land surveyed, that not a single hide or virgate of land, and not even (though it is a shame to say what he thought it no shame to do) a single ox or cow or pig was omitted and not returned in the reckoning, and all these writings were afterwards brought to him."

At other times when the king summoned his great council of tenants-in-chief there were different affairs to

discuss. William and his men talked over the old laws of the realm and decided that these should still be kept as in the days of King Edward the Confessor, who had died in the year 1065. They made regulations concerning markets to prevent the sale of stolen goods. They tried to put an end to secret violence by saying that if the murderer of a Norman could not be found a fine must be paid to the king by the lord of the land on which the dead man had lived or by all the neighbours together. They agreed that certain kinds of offence should be tried in courts held by bishops and abbots.

Some kinds of offence were judged by the tenants-in-chief themselves. If one of them had a dispute about land with another, the two who were quarrelling had to appear at the meeting of all the rest, and there the matter was settled. The king or someone who represented him was the chairman. To arrange such matters was indeed one of the chief reasons why the king summoned his tenants, though when they were assembled he consulted them on all sorts of business. The meeting was most often called a *curia* or court; the Latin word *curia* has a double meaning, as has the English word court. *Curia* may be used to mean a court of justice, and court may be used to mean a meeting for general reasons held by the king. A judge holds a court when he holds a meeting in which prisoners are tried, and the king holds a court when he invites guests to an evening party. To attend the *curia regis* (court of the king) meant to go to a meeting held by the king (or his representative) where disputes about land were heard.

The word *curia*, too, may mean not only the meeting-place, but the people who are summoned to go there, just as the word court may be used to mean the people who live with the king; it is possible to speak of the members of the king's court, or of a court appointment, in connection with people who live with the king to-day, and it was possible in the time of William I to speak of the members of the *curia regis*.

Tenants-in-chief did not like being summoned to attend the *curia*. Travelling was slow and expensive, and it might be annoying to be obliged to agree with the king and dangerous to refuse. The king on his side often needed to talk matters over quickly with a small number of people. So he formed the habit of summoning those tenants-in-chief who lived near the particular castle or house in which he was staying, together with certain men whom he had asked to undertake certain pieces of work; for example, the treasurer, and some of the heads of his household. A group of people made up in this way was also called the *curia regis*, and through it William and the kings who ruled after him carried on much of the ordinary work of government. The *curia regis* was not like parliament, which to-day makes the laws; nor like the great departments of state, such as the Ministry of Health, which see that laws are carried out; nor like the courts of justice where juries decide whether an accused man is guilty or not and judges or justices of the peace tell the guilty their punishments. But through the *curia regis* the Norman kings governed England.

The *curia* in its larger form met by custom in William the Conqueror's reign at fixed places. In its smaller form, it met wherever the king summoned it. In its larger form, it met by custom three times a year; in its smaller, it met whenever the king wanted to discuss business. So although the great council, or big *curia*, was more dignified and impressive than the small *curia*, the small *curia* had most of the work to do. All the kingly powers which William and his successors possessed they put into practical use through the *curia*. In the *curia* they met the treasurer who looked after their money affairs and the justiciar who was their chief official. The stating and sometimes the making of laws; the hearing of certain cases; the appointment of men to look after the royal interests in the country: all this was the work of the kings and all this they did with the help of certain great men in the *curia regis*.

Chapter III

How men of the countryside shared in public work

William of Normandy brought new ideas to England. He built new castles and let out land to new tenants. But he did not try to give the country entirely new customs. Even then the people of England loved their old ways. He made Anglo-Saxon arrangements more orderly, for, like other Normans, he liked to have tidy plans, but he used what he found in the country. Wherever he could he improved the old institutions and did not destroy them.

The *curia regis*, as William used it, was new. The men whom he summoned to it, like the men who had come to his court at home, were most of them tenants-in-chief; the dukes of Normandy had ruled with the help of such men. The Anglo-Saxon kings had ruled with the help of a group of men called the *witan*, or wise men, some of whom had not held land from the king.

Again, the officials whom William appointed to look after his interests in every county were sheriffs, and the Anglo-Saxon kings had used sheriffs too. But the early sheriffs had not been so important as the men who collected dues for William the Conqueror, for the Anglo-Saxon king had not been as strong as he. "He was very rigid", wrote a man who lived for a time at his court, "and [he] extorted from his subjects many marks of gold and many hundred pounds of silver."

But the strength of the king had good sides as well as bad. The same writer tells of them. "Amongst other things is not to be forgotten that good peace that [William] made in this land; so that a man of any account might go over his kingdom with his bosom full of gold. No man durst slay another had he never so much evil done to the other." And the methods by which William saw that the peace was kept were most of them Anglo-Saxon methods.

There were then no policemen. In some places lords, that is, holders or owners of land, had been responsible for the men who lived on their land; that is, they had had to see that any who had committed crimes, such as stealing or murder, were brought to justice. Men of bad

reputation who had no lord had been obliged to find ten or twelve other men to be responsible for them. So William found in England the idea of making a man's neighbours responsible for him. He used the idea by fining the neighbours if the murderers of a Norman could not be found, and by organising a system called frank-pledge through the midlands, the east, and the south.

By the frank-pledge system all men in the country were arranged in groups of about ten, called tithings, each with its leader, called the capital pledge or tithing-man. The names were entered on a list by a clerk, who received the fee of a penny for every name. When a man died his name was crossed out and another man was admitted. Some tithing lists, though none for the Conqueror's reign, are now in the British Museum, with lines through the names of men who had died. For two hundred years after the Conquest boys over twelve years old had all to be in a tithing; men who held a great deal of land, clergy, and monks were exempt; so were women. For the next two hundred years boys were also exempt; by the end of that time the plan was no longer followed.

Sometimes lords kept the lists for men on their land, but one of William's successors arranged that the sheriff should go round his county at Easter and Michaelmas to see that all men over twelve were in frank-pledge, that is, belonged to a tithing. Each man whose name was put on the frank-pledge list had to swear to be loyal to the king, and also to take an oath that he would not be a thief or consent to theft. The members of a tithing were respon-

sible for each other's attendance, if necessary, at the courts, and later they had a share in the duty of accusing men whom they thought had committed crime.

Courts to try criminals had been held all over England before the time of the Conqueror. There were no paid judges and no jury was used. Every three or four weeks the chief men of the counties and of the divisions of counties, called hundreds, came together to decide what should be done if someone was accused of having committed a crime. Usually they said that he or she must find twelve men to swear to his or her good character; if this could be done, the accused was allowed to go free. If twelve men could not be found, the accused was sent to the ordeal; this meant, as a rule, that he was flung into a river or pond and prevented from swimming. If he sank he was said to be innocent; if he floated, the water had cast him out and he was condemned as guilty and hanged. Sometimes fines were inflicted as punishments.

In Normandy William's men had known a custom called trial by battle, and in England they were allowed to keep it for certain offences. By this method, instead of depending on the oath of neighbours or on ordeal, the disputants fought, and the one who was beaten was counted guilty. Special blunt weapons were used and the fight was carried on according to rules. Both the ordeal and trial by battle were looked on as ways of referring to the judgment of God who, it was believed, would show which man was guilty; they were therefore very solemn occasions.

Clergy accused of offences were summoned to courts held by bishops. The bishops' courts, too, heard all disputes about marriages and about wills, and about any offences committed in churches. The bishops' courts punished by fine or imprisonment, not by death. It was usual for each bishop to have his own prison.

Other courts were held by tenants-in-chief. Men had to pay money for leave to bring cases to courts, so the tenants-in-chief liked holding them. In the villages labourers were summoned to courts held in the manor house if they had not kept the rules of the manor.

With so many different kinds of court and methods of doing justice it may seem strange that the chronicler could speak of the good peace which William made. Perhaps the reason was not so much that the methods were good as that the Conqueror made people fear him. "He was so stern that he recked not the hatred of them all; for they must follow withal the King's will, if they would live, or have land, or possessions, or even his peace." His younger son, Henry I, brought in many improvements, but after his death in 1135 there was great disorder in England.

Henry I had wished his daughter Matilda to reign after him, but the tenants-in-chief met in a Great Council and chose Stephen, his nephew. Then the "good peace" of the Norman kings was known no more, for Stephen could not keep the tenants-in-chief in order. War began; some fought for Stephen and some for Matilda, but most of them fought for themselves. "Every rich man made his

castles and held them against [the king], and they filled the land full of castles. They grievously oppressed the wretched men of the land with castle-works. When the castles were built they filled them with devils and evil men. Then took they those men that they thought had any goods, by night and by day, peasant men and women, and put them in prison for the sake of their gold and silver, and tormented them with unspeakable torments. . . . And that lasted the nineteen winters that Stephen was king, and ever it was worse and worse."

When Stephen died, the new king, Henry II, son of Matilda, saw that without order there could be no peace in the land. He set to work to show the tenants-in-chief that though they were powerful, the king was more powerful still; for example, he allowed no one to have a castle without his leave.

Henry never seemed to be tired. After a hard day's riding he would rest for a few hours and then, early in the morning, he would order his horse again when his sleepy servants were still yawning. His mind was as full of energy as his body. He studied the plans which his grandfather, Henry I, had made, and he had new ideas of his own. Most castles in England now are in ruins, or are used as museums, but some of the customs which Henry encouraged are part of our system of justice still.

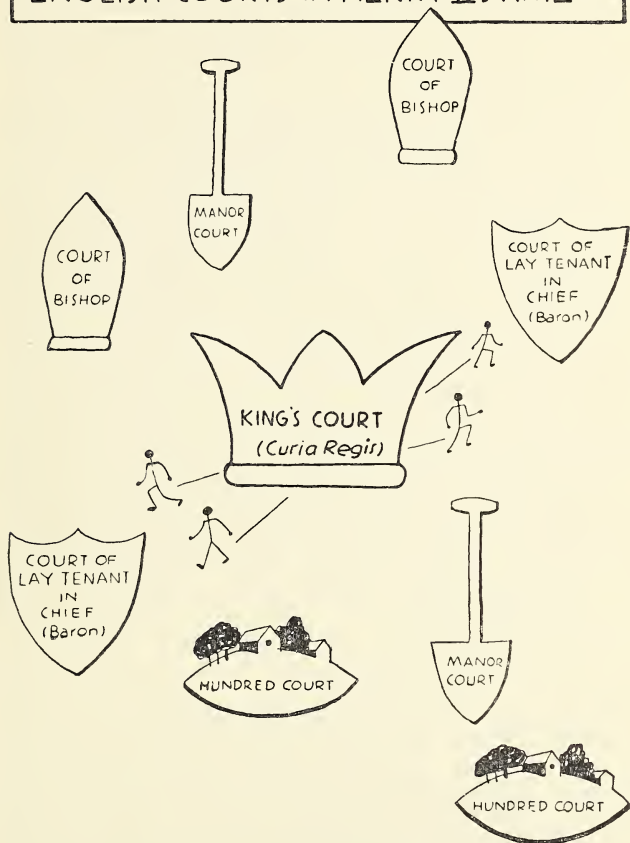
For example, Henry II sent judges to travel from place to place; they are called itinerant justices, from the Latin word *iter*, which means a journey. These judges went out from the *curia*, and wherever they arrived it was as though

the king himself and the *curia regis* had come. Different itinerant justices had different work to do. Some made a general enquiry about all the dues which ought to be paid to the king; this was usually done once in seven years. Some heard cases which might have been brought to the *curia*; some went three times a year to hear special kinds of disputes about land; others were charged to do justice when men were accused of murder. The sheriff met the justices when they came to his county and helped them to do their work. The tenants-in-chief disliked the itinerant justices, for they knew that through them their own power would grow less, but they were not allowed to keep the justices out of their lands.

The courts which the justices held became so important that after Henry's death the tenants-in-chief by degrees gave up holding courts of their own, which was just what he had hoped. When a travelling justice came to an ordinary local court, for example, a county court, that court became the king's court because men were there from his *curia*. So the king's justice and the king's courts by degrees swallowed up all other sorts of justice and courts in the land, except the courts held by the bishops.

There are still some courts held by bishops in England, but now the king is the head of them too, and every other court to-day belongs to the king. All criminal cases, that is all cases of murder and theft and some others, are conducted in the name of the king; the reports which are printed in newspapers say that the king has a case against someone; *Rex v. (versus) Smith or Jones* is the way the

ENGLISH COURTS IN HENRY II's TIME



One kind of court is omitted: which?

reports are headed. Cases which concern two individuals, or two groups of individuals, such as cases of debt and fraud, are heard in the king's courts too: these cases are called civil cases.

There are still travelling justices who travel to different parts of England. They go out from the courts of justice in London, as the justices used to go from the *curia*, and they hold their courts or assizes usually three times a year in the capital towns of the counties. They are still met by the sheriff, who arranges where they shall stay. Sometimes they go to church on Sunday wearing the scarlet gowns which are their robes of office. They hold trials for men accused of important offences; they listen to all the evidence and sum it up in a speech, and if a man is found guilty they say what his punishment is to be. They do not decide whether a man is guilty or not: the jury does that.

The use of the jury is another custom which has existed in England since the time of Henry II. He thought that the ordinary men of the countryside often knew better than anyone else what was happening, and he had heard how William I had made groups of men tell royal messengers the facts which had been written in Domesday Book; he knew, too, that men were accustomed to being responsible for each other in frank-pledge groups. He determined to use local men to help the itinerant justices. When they reached a county court, twelve honest free men from each hundred in the county had to swear to tell the truth, and then to present before them the men who were accused of having committed offences within the division.

The justices sent such men to the ordeal, and if they came safely through the ordeal they had to leave the country. Their goods were forfeit to the king.

Until 1933 there was a jury of this kind, the grand jury, whose business it was to say whether the evidence against a man was strong enough to make it right for him to be tried; the grand jury was the direct descendant of the jury which presented men to the justices in the time of Henry II. The jury which decides whether a man is guilty or not, called the petty jury, is also descended from juries used then, though it was not until the thirteenth century, when men were no longer sent to the ordeal, that twelve men of the countryside were used in all kinds of important trials as a petty jury.

To-day all men and women under sixty-five who own their own houses, or who rent houses of a fixed value, may be called on for service on petty juries, unless they are specially exempt. For eight hundred years the ordinary people of England have by the same plan, without pay, done their part in helping to keep the king's peace.

Chapter IV

How bishops and barons challenged the power of the king

Englishmen honour King George, but they do not obey him: the reason is that he never gives any orders about what shall be done in the country. No act of parliament is the law of the land without the royal consent; the heads

of the great departments of state are "his Majesty's servants"; all law courts are the courts of the king: yet it is true that the king himself gives no orders. Government is carried on in his name, but the men who actually govern are chosen by the mass of the people of England.

But William I and Henry II gave orders. They were helped by the *curia regis*, that is by the tenants-in-chief, the great holders of land, both bishops and laymen. The ordinary men of the countryside took their share in keeping the peace. But the king was the real ruler. When he was weak, like Stephen, there was disorder; when he was strong, like Henry II, the land had rest.

At the end of Henry II's reign the king of England was stronger than ever. He ruled not only Normandy, as William the Conqueror had done, but other lands in France so wide that he held more territory than the French king himself. In England his officials, the sheriffs, learned that they would lose their positions if they dared to be unfair to men in their counties. The lay tenants-in-chief, the barons, had failed in every attempt to oppose him, though they had tried again and again.

But there was one memory which must sometimes have come to the king in the night till the end of his life. He ruled more than half France and all England. But one day he had knelt in the cathedral at Canterbury, with bared shoulders, and the forty monks of the monastery had passed by, each with a knotted rope, and each monk had beaten the king. He had been doing penance because, some years before, the archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas

Kings of England, 1066-1485

<i>Norman House</i>	{	William I	1066
		William II	1087
		Henry I	1100
		Stephen	1135
<i>Angevin House (sometimes called Plantagenets)</i>	{	Henry II	1154
		Richard I	1189
		John	1199
		Henry III	1216
		Edward I	1272
		Edward II	1307
		Edward III	1327
<i>Lancastrian House</i>	{	Richard II	1377
		Henry IV	1399
		Henry V	1413
		Henry VI	1422
<i>Yorkist House</i>	{	Edward IV	1461
		Edward V	1483
		Richard III	1483-1485

Becket, had been murdered in his own cathedral, as the result of some angry words of the king. "Is there no one", he had exclaimed, "who will rid me of this turbulent priest?"

Henry had probably not intended that Becket should be murdered, but it was true that the king and the archbishop were then enemies; earlier, they had been friends. In those days clergymen were the best educated men in the country, and often the king's chief official was a bishop. The archbishop of Canterbury, in particular, could give great help to the king, and near the beginning of the reign Henry had suggested that Becket, his friend, should be made archbishop. The two men became enemies because Henry tried to lessen the power of the bishops' courts, as he was lessening the power of the barons. He said that it was not fair that clerks (clergymen) should be punished in bishops' courts, for those courts could put no one to death, and if a clergyman committed a murder, why should he escape hanging?

Henry suggested that in future when a clerk had been condemned in one of the bishops' courts, he should be punished there by being "unfrocked"—having his clerk's dress, the sign of his being a clerk, taken away—and that then, being only a layman, he should be handed over to the king's court, which could hang him. Becket would not agree. The king argued: Why should a clerk be able to murder two people before he is hanged? The archbishop argued: Why should a clerk have two punishments for one crime?

For years the dispute went on. At one point Henry thought that Becket had given in. But the archbishop was determined that though Henry might control the lay barons he should never completely control the bishops, who could only be controlled by the pope. In the end Becket was murdered, and Henry did penance. Soon afterwards an arrangement was made which led to a practice called benefit of clergy. This meant that the clergy, and later even those who could read, escaped trial and punishment in the king's courts if they were accused of crime. So there was one group of people in England who had not completely obeyed the king.

But the strength of Henry II was seen in the reign of his son, Richard the Lion-hearted, who spent most of his time on the Third Crusade. He was only in England ten months out of the ten years he reigned, yet there was no successful rebellion. When he was taken prisoner in Europe heavy taxes had to be raised for his ransom, and though men grumbled, they paid. They were ruled in an orderly way by the king's representative, Hubert Walter, archbishop of Canterbury. The towns grew richer and carried on trade. Local officials called coroners were elected in every county to help the itinerant justices by keeping a record of matters which had to be brought before them when they arrived in the county. The office has lasted ever since, though coroners now only do special work such as that of making enquiries into cases of sudden death.

It was in the reign of John, brother of Richard, that the first great effort was made to limit the power of the king.

It was made by the barons, with the help of Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury. John had quarrelled with everyone. He had fought with the king of France and been beaten, so that Normandy and all English lands in France, except in the south, were lost. He had quarrelled with the pope over the appointment of a new archbishop of Canterbury, and the pope had said that the men of England need no longer obey the king. John, frightened, had been obliged to allow Langton, the pope's nominee, to be archbishop; he had done homage to the pope for his lands, and had promised to pay him a sum of money every year. Stephen Langton, too, was against him. The people of England suffered because John cared for nobody's rights, and at last the barons made up their minds to bear with his conduct no longer.

The barons (that is, the tenants-in-chief who were laymen), like bishops and abbots, held their lands from the king. In return they had to attend the king's court and to pay certain dues, and most of them owed him military service: they had to fight forty days in a year if he called them and when they went to the wars they had to take with them a certain number of fighting men. A few of the tenants-in-chief had other services to do for the king; one, for example, had to put away his chessmen after a game, and another had to hold the king's head when he crossed the channel; but the usual service was military. The tenants-in-chief were obliged to perform their services. The king for his part might only demand what was customary.

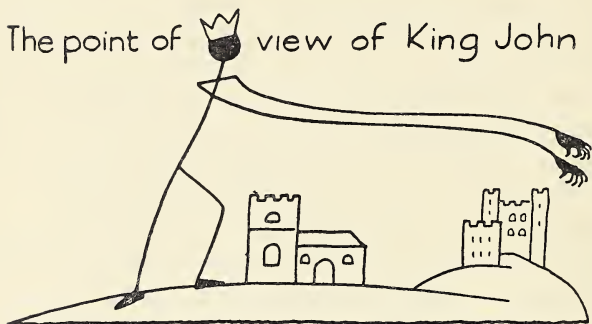
But John broke his side of the bargain. He asked for more than was due to him. Some barons refused to fight with him in France; John tried to force them to give him money instead. At last a group decided to work against him. They met at Bury St. Edmunds, and one day they said they would go to the church of the monastery there for a service. They came together "as if for prayers, but there was something else in the matter". They "held much secret discourse", and finally swore to make war on the king if he would not grant them their rights.

In June 1215 the king saw that resistance was hopeless. Only a small group of barons were with him. The rest, together with Stephen Langton, had drawn up a list of their grievances. They met the king near Windsor, at Runnymede, and there John agreed that he would respect in future the rights of the Church and the barons. The great seal, which made royal orders authentic, was stamped upon yellow wax. So Magna Carta, the Great Charter of England, was sealed. A copy, perhaps the one sealed at Runnymede, is in the British Museum, and three other copies of about the same date still exist.

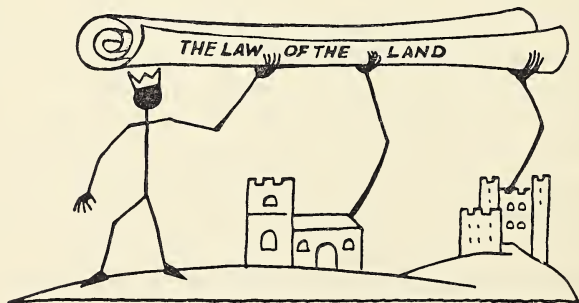
The importance of Magna Carta is that by it the barons said to the king, "You must keep your side of a bargain". He might never again treat the barons as if they had no rights. Near the end of the charter was a clause in which John had to say that they might choose twenty-five of their number to see that he kept his promises. If he broke them, four of the barons might go to him and politely remonstrate; they would then give him forty days in

THE DISPUTE ABOUT MAGNA CARTA

The point of view of King John



The point of view of the tenants-in-chief
(barons, bishops, abbots)



which to put things right. At the end of the forty days, if abuses had not been corrected, the twenty-five might seize the king's castles and force him to reform in any way they could, save only by bodily injury to himself, his queen, and his children. "They have given me twenty-five over-kings," said John.

The charter has sixty-three clauses; most of them are concerned first of all with the rights of the barons, but often the rights of the barons carried with them the rights of the mass of the people. For example, if the king asked the tenants-in-chief for money, they collected much of it from the mesne tenants to whom they in turn had lent part of their lands; and if for any reason the king took control of their estates, the men who lived there would come under the power of royal officers.

Some clauses said that the king must not abuse his rights of wardship and marriage. If a tenant-in-chief died when his son was under twenty-one, the king became the boy's guardian. The king had to see that his ward was properly brought up, but the rest of the income from the lands was used for his own purposes. If there was no son but a daughter under fourteen, the girl became the king's ward until she was sixteen, unless before that time the king had arranged for her marriage, as he usually did. If she was fourteen when her father died, she had not to become a royal ward, and in theory she could choose her own husband, so long as he was not one of the king's enemies. Magna Carta said that the guardian must keep up the houses, parks, fishponds, and mills of the ward out of

the proceeds of the estate; when the ward came of age the king must hand over the lands, stocked with ploughs and all that was necessary.

Some clauses were concerned with the king's right to ask the barons for money on certain occasions. They said that he might only take a special due, called an aid, when his eldest son was knighted, his eldest daughter married, or he himself was a prisoner in need of ransom, and that if the king wanted an aid on any other occasion he might only have it when the barons had agreed.

Some clauses were concerned with justice. The king promised that the barons should have their old rights of being judged in his court by their equals, and that justice should not be refused to any man or given unfairly after bribes. Other clauses made arrangements for the work of the justices of assize and for that of the coroners. The barons had come to respect the offices held by these men.

Some clauses dealt with the rights of foreign merchants in England. Such men had suffered, as the barons had done, from John's greed. By ancient custom the king might take tolls from traders from overseas; when a ship-load of foreign wine arrived, for example, he had a right to "one cask from a cargo of ten up to twenty casks, and two casks from a cargo of twenty or more". If a foreign merchant were granted the right to come and go and trade freely it was only because he had made some sort of bargain: a certain Nicholas the Dane, for example, gave John a hawk each time he entered the kingdom. The charter did not do away with such royal rights, but it made the king promise

that he would not take "evil tolls", that is tolls that were unjust. Foreign merchants still had to pay such tolls as English towns asked from them, for another clause granted to London and all other cities and ports their ancient rights.

Certain abuses of royal powers which had pressed hard on the poorer freemen were not to continue. The king promised that "no sheriff or bailiff [man in charge of a manor] of ours . . . shall take the horses or carts of any freeman for transport duty against the will of the said freeman". In another clause he said, "Neither we nor our bailiffs shall take, for our castles or for any other work of ours, wood which is not ours, against the will of the owner of that wood"; and again, "No village or freeman shall be compelled to make bridges at river banks, except those who from of old were legally bound to do so". This refers to John's inconsiderate habit of obliging men to leave their ordinary work and build new bridges for him to use when he rode out to enjoy a day's hawking.

In Magna Carta the barons forced John to admit that other people had rights. The king was not free to do just what he liked. He was under the law of the land.

Chapter V

How parliament began

The barons were disappointed. Magna Carta had not fulfilled their hopes. John had died the year after he had given it his unwilling consent, and his son, Henry III, was

then only nine years old. Henry's advisers had three times reissued the charter, with a few changes, while he was a boy, and after he came of age the barons had often persuaded him to say he would keep it. But the king had broken his promises. Then he had married a lady from France and had given to her uncles and friends the positions which English barons wanted themselves. Everything seemed to be going wrong. The clause in the charter of 1215 which allowed twenty-five of the barons to use force with the king had been omitted from later editions. What could they do? In 1258 the king had just summoned his great men to meet him at Oxford. They decided to assemble in armour, carrying weapons, and so to frighten the king.

The barons at Oxford did not want to fight. They chose some of themselves to form committees who should advise the king, and they made him agree that he would do nothing without the consent of the committees. But the king kept this promise no better than others. A few years later fighting began.

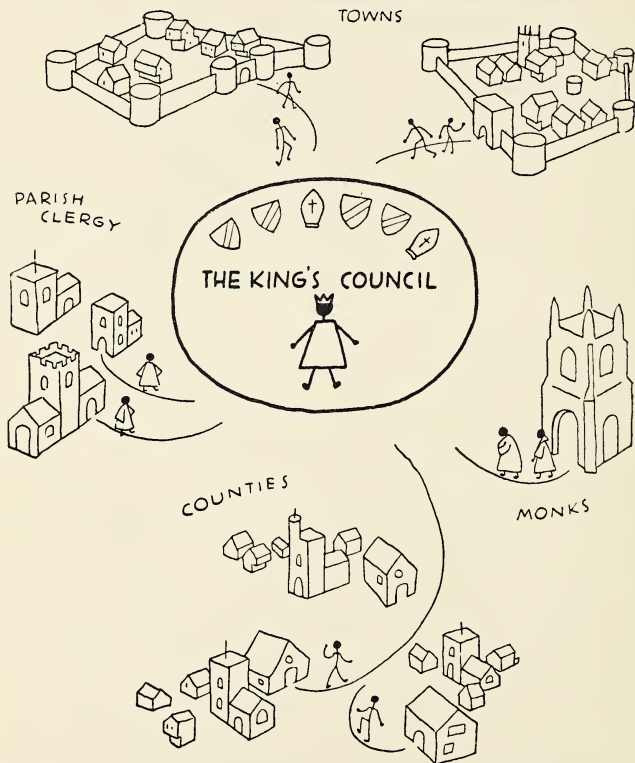
The barons' leader was Simon de Montfort. His men met the king's men outside Lewes in Sussex, a town whose steep streets were built then as now on the lower slopes of the Downs. Henry was taken prisoner, and though Simon let him go free he demanded Prince Edward, his son, as a hostage. Then Simon persuaded the king to summon certain barons and bishops to meet him in London to discuss the securing of peace and other matters concerning which he desired their advice. The sheriffs of every

county were commanded to send two knights, or smaller land-holders, from their counties; and certain towns, including Lincoln and York, were to send two citizens. Naturally, Simon did not suggest that towns which did not support him should send representatives. In 1265 the assembly met, but no one had any new plans to suggest, and soon after fighting began again.

Prince Edward escaped from de Montfort's keeping, and led the king's men. He met the rebels at Evesham one August day, and there, bravely fighting by the river, Simon was killed. His attempt to force King Henry to govern justly had ended in failure. He did not know that he had used a plan which in the end would do what the barons by charters and committees could never have done. He had called representatives of towns and counties to discuss public affairs with the barons.

It is not likely that Simon or the men of his time thought that he was doing anything new. The idea of choosing a few men to speak for the rest was familiar enough in the courts. Knights of the shire, that is ordinary lords of the manors as distinct from the great holders of land, had been mentioned in Magna Carta as men who helped the justices of assize; they were already accustomed to public work. Sometimes the king had summoned them to speak with him. The towns, too, were aware of their own increasing importance. Many of them were on Simon de Montfort's side, for they wanted good government that they might carry on trade. It was natural that he should ask their advice. Perhaps some of the knights and towns-

The Great-grandfather of Parliament -- 1275



men were surprised when they found that they were expected to discuss affairs with the barons, but stranger things than that happen in times of war.

In 1272 Henry died and Prince Edward became King Edward I. He had seen the bad government of his father and he had understood the aims of the rebel whom he had beaten; he knew what he desired for his country. By the time of his death in 1307 he had made himself respected in England, he had conquered Wales and begun to bring orderly government there, and he had won the hatred of Scotland by attempting its conquest. His tomb is in Westminster Abbey, and part of its epitaph can still be read: "Edwardus Primus. Scotorum malleus. Pactum serva" (Edward I. The hammer of the Scots. Keep troth).

Edward had seen too much of rebellious barons to think that they ought to have the chief power in the land. From time to time he sent for representatives of the towns and counties and of the ordinary clergy to discuss affairs with the tenants-in-chief. In 1275 he summoned men from all these groups to Westminster; this was the first national assembly, the strange great- or great-great-grandfather of the parliament which makes laws for England to-day.

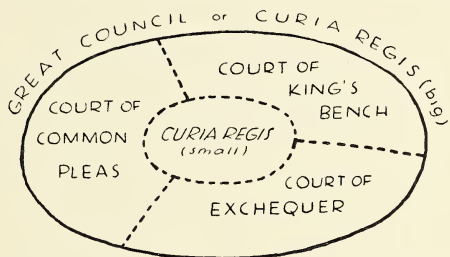
Edward still used the Great Council. He persuaded the barons to agree to orders which in several ways strengthened his own royal power. No one, he thought, should grow rich at the expense of the king. For example, a law was passed which said that men might not give their land to churches or monasteries without his leave. This was because such land ceased to pay all the dues the king

claimed; he would lose wardships and marriage when land passed into the "dead hand" of the church. The law was called the Statute of Mortmain, mortmain being a word made from the Latin words for "dead hand", and, though it is used rather differently now, the statute is still in force.

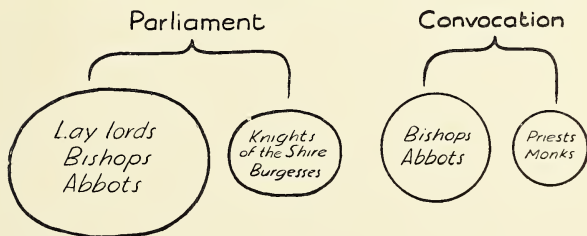
Then the king strengthened the royal courts, and the barons almost ceased to hear cases concerning freemen in courts of their own, though disputes among villeins were still heard in manorial courts. From the *curia regis* three great courts had developed; they sat at Westminster and important offenders were tried there. They were called the Court of King's Bench, the Court of Common Pleas (that is, ordinary offences between man and man), and the Court of the Exchequer. Each court had records of its business written on parchment skins which were sewn together and rolled tightly up, one roll or more for each year. They are still taken care of, hundreds and hundreds of them, in the Public Record Office in London. Special barons were appointed as judges in the three courts, or the judges might be learned lawyers who were not barons at all. The judges were paid by the king. The king could dismiss them if he thought they did their work badly.

Throughout the country Edward was determined that the peace should be kept. In some places, he said, the juries which were supposed to bring men suspected of crime before justices had not done their work; "from day to day, robberies, murders, burnings be more often com-

The CURIA REGIS under Edward I



Assemblies in the time of Edward III



mitted than they have been heretofore". A law was passed one October called the Statute of Winchester, which imposed fines on counties and hundreds which concealed their wrongdoers; if a crime were committed on the boundary between two hundreds then both the hundreds were to be counted responsible. The new rules were not to come into force before Easter so that no one would be fined without warning. They were to be solemnly proclaimed in all "shire-courts, hundred-courts, markets, fairs, and all other places where great resort of people is, so that none may excuse himself by ignorance".

Other clauses in the Statute of Winchester made other rules. This is one of them:

For the more surety of the country, the king hath commanded that in great towns being walled, the gates shall be closed from the sun-setting until the sun-rising; and that no man do lodge in suburbs, nor in any place out of the town except in the daytime, without his host will answer for him.

The bailiffs of towns were to make enquiry every week, or at least every fortnight, to see that this rule was kept. In the summer, watch was to be kept at all city gates by sixteen men, and at the gates of less important towns by a smaller number, "continually all night from the sun-setting unto the sun-rising". They were to arrest all strangers and hold them safely until the morning, when if they had business they were to go free, and if they had not they were to be handed over to the sheriff.

Another clause ordered that highways should be widened, so that on each side of the path there should be

two hundred feet clear of ditches, bushes, or undergrowth, "where a man may lurk to do hurt". Travellers might so pass safely, without fear that an enemy might suddenly jump out upon them.

Lastly, every freeman between fifteen and sixty years old must keep arms in his house, according to his wealth, that he might be ready to pursue criminals. A man who owned land worth £15 a year and goods worth forty marks (a mark was 13s. 4d.), must have a hauberk (coat of mail), a helmet of iron, a sword, a knife, and a horse; and a man who owned no land and had goods worth less than twenty marks, must have "swords, knives, and other less weapons"; if a man's goods were not worth valuing at all, he must if possible have bows and arrows.

Edward I in this clause was saying the same kind of thing as had been said in an order given more than a hundred years earlier by Henry II. The law made in Edward I's time was not repealed till the reign of James I. So for about four hundred years Englishmen were supposed to have arms in their houses to be used for the king's service and the protection of the country.

The Statute of Winchester and most of the other laws of the time of Edward I express the king's policy. They were passed by an assembly because the king wished them passed, just as William I had issued orders with the consent of the *curia regis*. But the Conqueror would have been surprised if he could have attended most of Edward's assemblies. Sometimes, indeed, he would have felt at home, for he would have found the barons and bishops

and abbots discussing affairs in a Great Council, though perhaps Edward was listening to what they said with more attention than William used to give to his tenants-in-chief. But at other times William would have seen unexpected groups of men in Westminster Hall. ("It's a fine building"; he might have thought, "my son William began it.") Here, representatives from the towns were loudly saying to each other that the sum of money the king asked was preposterous, and that they would suggest half the amount; there, knights of the shire were agreeing that they were poor men; here, again, ordinary clergymen talked with dignified bishops about how small a gift it was safe to offer the king. The Conqueror would have been puzzled to find unimportant people there with the great of the land. But Edward, who had invited them, would have been equally puzzled could he have seen the parliament of to-day, where the representatives of the mass of the people dominate.

Many hundreds of years were to pass before the House of Commons gained the power it now has, but within some fifty years of Edward's death, the main outlines of parliament as we know it had been sketched. There was a chamber, in which sat bishops, abbots, and barons: each of them was summoned, when the king chose, by a separate written order or writ addressed specially to him. There was a chamber in which sat knights of the shires, that is smaller landowners from each county, and burgesses, that is representatives from the larger towns: these men were summoned by writs addressed to the

sheriffs, who had to make arrangements for them to be chosen. The clergy preferred to discuss some matters apart from laymen, especially the question of grants they should make to the king, so when parliament was sitting they met in a separate assembly, called Convocation; it had two groups or houses, though bishops and abbots also attended the House of Lords.

The work which was done by the Houses of Parliament was different in many ways from the work which they do to-day; the powers which they had with regard to the king and with regard to each other were different; they did not meet regularly, but only when the king chose to summon them. But, by the fourteenth century, parliament had come into being. The instrument which would one day control the king had been forged.

Chapter VI

How over-mighty subjects brought disorder to England

In the name of God, Amen. We, John bishop of St. Asaph, John abbot of Glastonbury, Thomas earl of Gloucester, Thomas lord Berkley, Thomas Erpingham and Thomas Gray, knights, and William Thirning, justice, for the peers and nobles of the realm of England spiritual and temporal, and for the commons of the realm . . . commissioners specially deputed . . . after having considered the very many . . . crimes of the said Richard [II] . . . pronounce, decree, and declare that Richard himself has been and is useless, incapable, utterly insufficient, and unworthy; and . . . we depose him.

In 1399, less than a hundred years after Edward I had shown England what a strong king could do, and had made it his custom to summon representatives from the counties and towns as well as his bishops and barons, parliament deposed his great-great-grandson. The barons had discovered that not only the king but they themselves could make use of parliament; they had power in the House of Lords, and they could influence the Commons to do what they said. So when Richard II offended them they deposed him and set up one of their number, Lancaster, a cousin of Richard, to reign as King Henry IV. Richard was powerless against him. Shakespeare, nearly two hundred years later, wrote a play in which he makes Richard express what perhaps he felt:

What must the king do now? must he submit?
The king shall do it: must he be deposed?
The king shall be contented: must he lose
The name of king? o' God's name, let it go:
I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,

.
My sceptre for a palmer's walking-staff,
My subjects for a pair of carved saints,
And my large kingdom for a little grave,
A little, little grave, an obscure grave.

Henry IV in theory owed his position to parliament, so in his reign and the reign of his son, Henry V, parliament was often summoned and passed a number of laws. But really he was king because a group of his friends, the great men of the land, gave him their support. When his grandson, a baby nine months old, became King Henry VI in

1422, it was clear that on the nobles the fate of the country depended. They quarrelled among themselves for control of the king, and at last they fought. Poor Henry went mad. He was shut up in prison, and in 1461 his rival Edward IV was king. In 1483 Edward died, and his son, who was twelve, became Edward V. Soon after, the king and his younger brother were killed in the Tower. Their uncle, Richard III, became king. Men said he had murdered the boys. He was hated. There was fighting again. At last Henry Tudor beat Richard and became King Henry VII in 1485. To win over his enemies he married Elizabeth of York, Richard's sister.

That is the story of the Wars of the Roses, put shortly. The badge of the House of Lancaster, to which Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI belonged, was a red rose, and the badge of the House of York, to which Edward IV, Edward V, and Richard III belonged, was a white rose. The wars show that when a king was weak there was no one to stop great men from quarrelling and disturbing the kingdom. They used parliament in their struggles, for they controlled it; the House of Commons could not control them. It could pass laws, but it could not see that they were carried out; it could not even see that those who broke them were punished.

The men of the time complained bitterly. In one doggerel poem these lines come:

Many laws and little right;
Many acts of parliament
And few kept with good intent.

A judge called Sir John Fortescue wrote a book in which he said that there were two great reasons for all the troubles: the poverty of the king, which meant that he could not act independently of the nobles; and the power of the "over-mighty subject".

Often the great lords made the work of the law-courts impossible. They bribed judges and juries; they supported their own followers in such a way that no one dared take proceedings against them. Sometimes they sent armed retainers or servants and prevented a court from being held.

For example, the vicar of Mere, near Glastonbury, had one afternoon been hearing confessions in his church. On his way home he met a man carrying a long pike, who had with him a "horryble grete dogge". The dog, urged on by his owner, attacked the vicar, who was "likely there to have been murdered, had he not smitten the said dog with the church door key under his ear". The vicar wanted to bring the case into a court, but he knew that to do so was useless, for his assailant was one of the abbot of Glastonbury's men, and no justice could, therefore, be hoped for.

Quarrelsome lords attacked each other's houses or sent their retainers to assault their enemies on the highway. A man might be riding quietly towards an inn with his servant and suddenly he might be surrounded and killed, "all, as men say, in a Pater-noster while", that is, in as short a time as it would take to say the Lord's Prayer. No one felt safe.

Margaret Paston, a Norfolk lady, wrote to her son John in London to send her crossbows and square-headed arrows (for the house was too low for the use of long bows), as well as pole-axes to keep indoors. Men made "bars to bar the door crosswise" and holes in the walls "to shoot out at, both with bows and with hand-guns". Margaret once wrote to John to beg him to send someone to take charge of the men in one of his houses, for, she said, "I cannot well guide nor rule soldiers, and also they set not by a woman as they should set by a man". John sent "four well assured and true men" to be there who could "well shoot both guns and cross-bows, and amend and string them, and devise bulwarks, or any things that should be a strength to the place". John ordered armour for them, and two beds. They were gentlemanly, comfortable fellows, he said, though one of them was bald.

An "over-mighty subject" might intimidate not only private gentlemen but the monks of a monastery. The abbot of Eynsham in Oxfordshire complained of injuries done to him and his monastery by Sir Robert Harcourt, knight, and divers evil-disposed retainers. This was the abbot's story.

A certain John Walsh, servant to Sir Robert Harcourt, borrowed a draught-net for catching fish in the Thames from a monk, Roger Wallingford, who had charge of the fishing nets of the monastery. Roger lent the net, and when the fishing was finished brought it home again on September 19, but he left the stones with which it was weighted on an island which was part of John's property.

Next February Roger took with him an old servant of the monastery and went in a boat to fetch the stones. While they were collecting them, John found out that Roger and the servant were there. He entered the boat and rowed it away, "and so left them there like to perish, for it was cold weather and frost". When they found what had happened, they cried for help. At last someone heard and came with a boat.

A month later John Walsh came in a boat of his own into the private water "within the orchard of the said monastery", and the monastery officer, finding it there, "took a lock and locked the said boat to a tree". John, unable to move the boat, went home, fetched tools and returned to the orchard over a high wall. Two monks were walking there, and John abused them and struck one to the ground with his bill; the other one fled. John pursued him, and left his boat.

Later, on March 23, four monks were walking in the orchard when eleven evil-disposed men, retainers of Harcourt and others, came climbing over the wall. The astonished monks saw them begin to hew down the tree to which the boat was fastened. The monks went to the Prior. He came out himself and enquired of the men "why they came there so suspiciously over so great high walls being ditched fifteen foot broad in such forcible manner". They answered, "Churls, deliver us the boat that ye have arrested or else we will have it whether ye will or no". The Prior answered them quietly. Whereupon they departed.

But on April 10 retainers of Harcourt went to Eynsham with bows and arrows, swords, bucklers, halberds, bills, and daggers, enquiring if any monastery servant was there. "And so it fortuned that they met with an innocent body, one John Hadley, clerk of the church of the said monastery, having a bottle in his hand to fetch oil for the said church." And one of them violently smote John Hadley and wounded him on the head. But he escaped back to the monastery and hurried in to tell the Prior and the monks, being at supper, how they had hurt him and that they were coming after him. The Prior sent for the constable and the tithing-men to see the peace kept. So the constable and tithing-men came and charged them to keep the peace in God's name and the king's. But they defied them and put them in jeopardy of their lives. Then they rushed to the gates of the monastery and shot in arrows and hewed at the gates with their bills and lifted them out of the hooks with their halberds. The porter and others put timber against the gates and propped them up. Then Harcourt's men took their halberds and hewed at the legs of the defenders under the gates, "and then they made an outcry and called for straw and furzes for to set fire on the gates and on the said monastery". Then they went off to get more helpers and the Prior set men to watch all night. In the morning he sent for two justices of the peace, who came and charged the constables to see goodwill kept. Moreover, they warned Harcourt's retainers that they would be answerable in the courts for the bad deeds done.

But Harcourt interfered with the courts and would not suffer the king's laws to be peaceably executed; the men he had wronged could get no justice. If juries were not returned after his mind he stopped them with threats, and once he kept certain persons shut up in a room and prevented others from appearing before the king's justices.

Against such powerful lords as Harcourt, tithing-men were helpless; so were the constables, local officers appointed to supervise the arrangements for keeping the peace. Justices of the peace could do little more. Since the fourteenth century these men had held courts which had superseded the old courts of the shires (counties) and hundreds, and in ordinary times these courts worked well, as they still do. The justices were local landowners appointed by the king; they were not professional judges and they were not paid. But they used common sense, and cases which could not come before them at the meetings of their courts, called sessions, were heard by the king's travelling justices when they visited the county. But men like Harcourt defied both J.P.'s and royal justices.

Edward IV, the Yorkist king, made an effort to bring about order. But it was not until Henry VII's time that the evil was really attacked. He followed the plan of appointing certain men of his council as a committee to try cases where there was "too great might on one side and un-might on the other". Later, such a committee or the whole council doing such work became known as the Star Chamber, and did a great deal to "bridle stout (bold) noblemen and gentlemen" and force them to keep the

law. It used no jury; it could not execute men, but it could inflict almost any other kind of punishment, and it often made people pay heavy fines.

In the sixteenth century other committees or courts were set up which did work like the Star Chamber's; the Council of the Marches, for the Welsh border, sat at Ludlow, and the Council of the North sat at York. All these courts were offshoots of the king's council, which itself still heard cases. They took their power, as the old *curia regis* had done, from the king. Once more there was order in England because her ruler was strong.

Chapter VII

How peace and justice were established by Tudor kings

It is not difficult to get hold of a Prayer Book: most people can borrow a copy. But not many people think how much can be learned from the Prayer Book about the way in which England was governed when it was compiled.

The first English Prayer Book was drawn up by Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, with some helpers, in the reign of Edward VI. It was published in 1549, and another edition, with some alterations, was published three years later. In Queen Mary's time, of course, its use was abolished. A new edition was published in the first year of Elizabeth's reign. This was used until 1643, when it ceased to be the legal service book for nineteen years. In 1662 parliament said that Elizabeth's edition, with a very

few changes, was again to be used. No important alterations were suggested until 1929, when the bishops of the Church of England put forward a new book to be used as an alternative, but parliament would not accept their proposals. So anyone who looks at a Prayer Book to-day can discover some of the ideas people had in the time of the Tudors.

First of all, the king was clearly of great importance. Each of the chief services for ordinary use contains prayers for him. His safety, honour, and welfare are looked on as closely connected with the safety, honour, and welfare of his dominions; under him Englishmen pray to be "godly and quietly governed", free from the power of such ill-disposed men as Sir Robert Harcourt. A strong king alone, so it seemed, could give England peace, and it was partly because under Henry VIII and Elizabeth the country was "quietly governed" that men gave to their "gracious sovereign" a passionate loyalty. A story is told of a man in Elizabeth's reign who had one hand cut off because he had broken the laws; with the other he seized his hat and, waving it, cried, "God save the Queen".

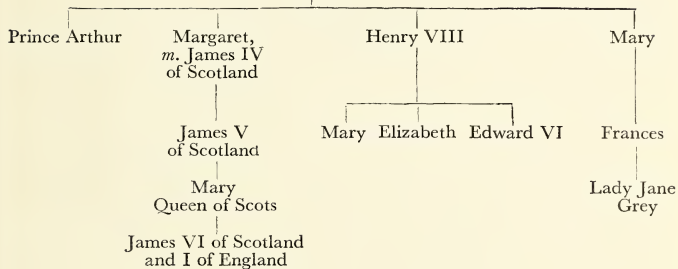
To Englishmen in the days of the Tudors love of king and of country were one. In his play, *Henry V*, Shakespeare tells a king's story, but it is really the greatness of England he sings. The country was united and independent. "The King's Majesty", says one of the Articles at the end of the Prayer Book, "hath the chief power in this Realm of England . . . and is not nor ought to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction." No one from outside the

Rulers of the Tudor House

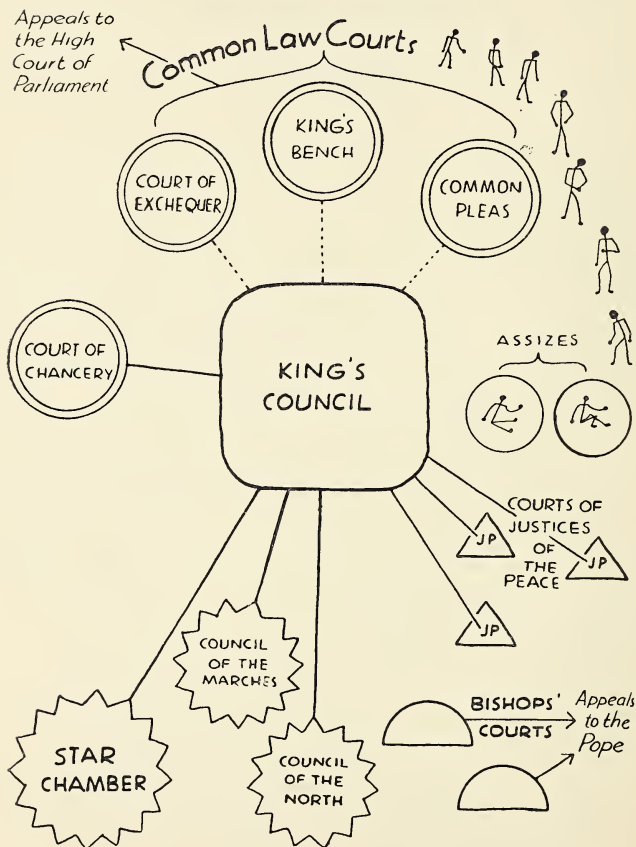
Henry VII	1485
Henry VIII	1509
Edward VI	1547
Mary	1553
Elizabeth	1558-1603

The family of Henry VII

Henry VII m. Elizabeth of York



ENGLISH COURTS IN THE EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURY



realm might interfere. So Shakespeare in his play, *Richard II*, wrote of "England, bound in with the triumphant sea".

Until the time of Henry VIII, and again in the short reign of the Roman Catholic Mary, the pope was Head of the Church in England as in other countries. This meant that he had influence in the appointment of some English bishops and that sums of money were paid to him by English clergymen. It meant also that any cases which were still tried in the bishops' courts, as they had been in the reign of Henry II and earlier, would, if they were not finally settled there, be taken to the pope's court in Rome. After Henry VIII was made Head of the Church such cases were finally settled by the king; "unto whom", as the Prayer Book says, "all causes appertain". The king could not do everything himself, so in practice such cases went to a special group of judges. Later, the work was given to councillors in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

The council was, next to the king, of first importance in the government of England. In the Litany, a long prayer in the Prayer Book, compiled by Cranmer, the first clause after the prayers for the royal family and for the clergy is for the council. "That it may please Thee to endue the Lords of the Council, and all the Nobility, with grace, wisdom, and understanding." All members of the council were not among the nobility. Some were officials and some ordinary middle-class men whom the king had appointed. All the nobility were not members of the council, but they sat in the House of Lords and they were still looked on as leaders in England.

The council had sometimes as many members as forty, sometimes as few as eighteen. A president was appointed, for although the council was always the king's council, the king did not attend all its meetings. The king's chief secretary was also secretary to the council. A small number of councillors were bound to be always present, within reach of the king, in case they were needed. They had to attend by ten in the morning and by two in the afternoon. In 1540 a new council register or minute book was begun, and a clerk was appointed to keep it.

There was no business too great or too small for the council's attention. It saw that the laws were carried out, and it could issue orders or ordinances which had to be obeyed. It regulated trade and wages; it supervised the justices of the peace; it decided what might or might not be printed, acting promptly to suppress "lewd and naughty words", by which it meant anything which might seem to be treasonable. In making enquiries the council was able to use torture, which was never used in the ordinary courts in England. It might deal with poachers, as with John Butler of Moor Park in Hertfordshire, who was forced to abstain from snaring pheasants or partridges. It might make arrangements for moving the luggage of a royal guest, or it might send orders to a tailor to provide clothes for a noble prisoner in the Tower, including two doublets, and two nightcaps of velvet and satin. It could hear complaints and try cases, for however many courts developed from the *curia regis* or council, the king, and therefore his councillors, never lost powers

of justice. These powers of the council were like the flame of a candle: other candles can be lighted from it, and still it burns.

After the clause for the council and nobility, the next prayer in the Litany is for the magistrates. "That it may please Thee to bless and keep the Magistrates, giving them grace to execute justice, and to maintain truth." Magistrates are judges or justices, and include all those who hold courts in London or in the country, but perhaps Cranmer was specially thinking here of the justices of the peace. When he wrote the Litany they held courts called quarter sessions four times a year, and, soon after, two justices were allowed to deal with small offences in petty sessions about once in three weeks. Before the end of the sixteenth century their work had been more than doubled. In Elizabeth's reign it was said that they "be those in whom at this time for the repressing of robbers, thieves, and vagabonds . . . the prince putteth his special trust". When the council gave new orders or parliament passed new laws, it was the J.P.'s who had to carry them out. Their backs were loaded, they said, "with stacks of statutes". A modern writer calls them the Tudor men-of-all-work.

By the end of the century the J.P.'s had to see that the poor laws were kept; they had to choose four men in each parish to act with the churchwardens as overseers of the poor, and to supervise their work; they had to decide how much money must be paid by householders for the relief of the poor. The lame, old, and blind were cared for in

almshouses. Children whose parents had died or could not keep them were put out as apprentices. Men who could not find work were employed on stocks of flax, hemp, wool, and iron which were kept for the purpose. Men who would not work were sent to houses of correction where they were obliged to do something. Begging was forbidden. A man found wandering about and begging was whipped and sent back to his own parish with a letter or "testimonial" of this kind:

A. B., a sturdy rogue, of tall stature, red-haired and bearded, about the age of thirty years and having a wart near under his right eye, born (as he confesseth) at East Tilbury in Essex, was taken begging at Shorne in this county of Kent the 10 of March, 1598, and was then there lawfully whipped therefor, and he is appointed to go to East Tilbury aforesaid the direct way by Gravesend over the River of Thames; for which he is allowed one whole day and no more at his peril.

Such a testimonial was signed by a justice of the peace, constable, tithing-man, or minister, or any two of them, and the substance of it was registered by the minister in a special book.

The justices fixed the rate of wages and settled labour disputes; they saw that roads were mended, and supervised the work of the surveyors of highways, who were elected in parishes from the time of Queen Mary; they licensed ale-houses, and "put away common selling of ale and beer" in such places as they judged unsuitable; they kept order at fairs; they dealt with the stealing of hawks' and swans' eggs; they arrested and punished pirates. The

council was like a hand through which the king worked, and the J.P.'s were like fingers by which the council reached out to every part of the country. Well might the Litany pray for grace for the magistrates.

The Litany does not pray for parliament. Day in and day out the council and magistrates worked, but parliament only met when the king had chosen to summon it. The Prayer Book has a prayer for "the High Court of Parliament, to be read during their Session". Four or five years might go by with no summons. Yet the Tudors used parliament. Though they could give orders through the council, they knew that any great changes must be made through parliamentary laws. Part of their income was independent of parliament, but they never tried to take money by taxes without its consent. They knew that if they had done so Englishmen would have objected. So from time to time there was need for the special prayer to be used for the "High Court of Parliament".

Five hundred years earlier, the *curia regis* of William the Conqueror had been, first of all, his court for the tenants-in-chief. Four hundred years later, when men speak of parliament they think first of the House of Commons, which was never a court. When the Prayer Book was published, there was a House of Lords and a House of Commons, but the House of Lords, which was descended from the *curia regis*, was the more important House; so men thought of parliament as a court. The Lords had final power to settle cases which could not be settled in either the courts at Westminster or the assizes. It did not

interfere with decisions made by the council or by the Star Chamber, but the decisions of the ordinary courts of the land might be changed by the House of Lords. The House of Commons had no share in this judicial work, but by the end of the sixteenth century its members had become eager about different work of their own. They had begun, too, to the surprise of Elizabeth, to claim that there were no matters which they might not discuss.

More than once Elizabeth sent messages to try to check members. "Her Majesty granteth you liberal [free] but not licentious speech, liberty therefore but with due limitations. For even as there can be no good consultation where all freedom of speech is barred, so will there be no good conclusion where every man may speak what he listeth without fit observation of persons, matters, times, places, and other needful circumstances." By liberty of speech, Elizabeth said, she meant that each man might vote for or against a bill as he pleased, "with some short declaration of his reason", not that men were free to speak in the House on any subject they liked, "to frame a form of religion or a state of government as to their idle brains shall seem meetest".

But the "idle brains" went on thinking, and members, though they were very polite, talked more and more on all matters which in their judgment concerned the good of the realm. Sometimes they even forgot their politeness; once a member rose from his seat and indignantly burst out in this way:

Amongst other, Mr. Speaker, two things do great hurt in this place . . . the one is a rumour which runneth about the House. . . . Take heed what you do, the Queen liketh not such a matter: whoever preferreth it, she will be offended with him. . . . The other: sometimes a message is brought into the House, either of commanding or inhibiting . . . I would to God, Mr. Speaker, that these two were buried in hell. I mean rumours and messages.

For this speech, the man who made it went to prison for more than a month.

At the end of the reign the Commons consulted freely, and sometimes the queen gave up her own wishes and did what they wanted. They on their side knew what their country owed to her, and they loved her, so they hesitated to press her too far. But all was not happy. In the parliament of 1601, which was the last of her reign, she passed through the House of Commons one day, and as usual offered her hand to the Speaker (the chairman) to kiss, "but not one word she spake unto him". "As she went through the Commons very few said, 'God save your Majesty', as they were wont in all great assemblies, and so she returned back again to Whitehall by water."

Chapter VIII

How king and parliament fought

Everyone who knows London knows the wide street called Whitehall. At the top there is a bronze statue of a man on horseback; at the lower end near the river are the



Charles I

Houses of Parliament, and outside them is a statue of a man holding a sword and a Bible. Statues are set up in cities that the men whom they represent may be remembered. They are portraits in bronze or stone of people their countrymen honour. Yet these two statues, within five minutes' walk, represent men of whom one signed the death-warrant of the other. They are portraits of Charles I and of Oliver Cromwell.

One January morning, a morning so cold that he asked for a second shirt lest men should see him shiver and think he was frightened, Charles Stuart, king of England, was taken to Whitehall to die. By a special court of justice, set up by the House of Commons, he had been judged a "tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy to the good people of this nation", and condemned to be "put to death by the severing of his head from his body". Charles had refused to acknowledge the right of such a court to try him. The House of Commons, he said, which was never a court, could not set one up; and even if it had been able to, it must first have asked the consent of the people of England; no man's life was safe if the Commons could take to themselves such powers. "Thus you see that I speak not for my own right alone, as I am your king, but also for the true liberty of all my subjects, which consists not in the power of government, but in living under such laws, such a government as may give themselves the best assurance of their lives, and property of their goods." Charles had protested in vain. At four minutes past two on the afternoon of January 30, 1649, having said his



Oliver Cromwell

prayers, with complete dignity and calm, he died.

The story is told that that night one of his followers, who had had leave to watch by the body, saw a cloaked visitor enter the room where it lay. The figure stood by its side for a moment, and the watcher heard the words, "Cruel necessity". From the voice and gait he guessed that the visitor was Oliver Cromwell.

Nine and a half years later Cromwell lay dying. One night his attendants heard him speak. He was saying a prayer. "Lord . . . I come to Thee for Thy people. Thou hast made me, though unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good, and Thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death. Lord, however Thou do dispose of me, continue and go on to do good for them. . . . And give us a good night, if it be Thy pleasure. Amen." A few days later, on the day he accounted his lucky day, September 3, Cromwell died.

Both men believed that they fought for the right. Both men thought that they stood for the liberties of the people of England. London has statues to both. But at the time there were bitter struggles. Brother fought against brother and father against son, though the king allowed his own surgeon to tend parliamentary wounded, and Mrs. Hutchinson, wife of the parliamentarian governor of Nottingham, bound up the hurts of royalist prisoners as well as of men of her own side, thinking it her duty to treat them as "fellow-creatures, not as enemies". "Surely", wrote a staunch royalist, "this history to after ages will

seem rather a romance, a feigned thing, rather than a matter really acted." To the men of the time it was real and stern enough.

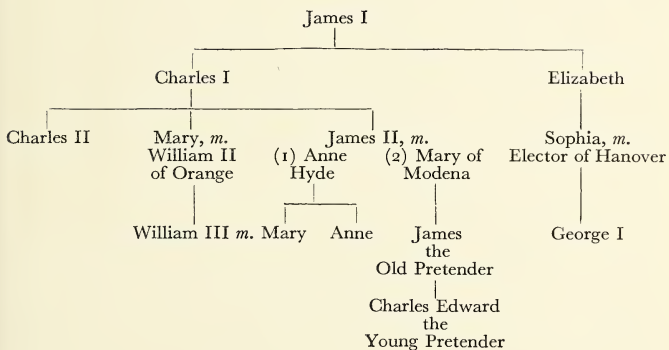
The struggle was round the old question. Was the king under the laws, or was he above them? Four hundred years earlier, the barons had forced the king to agree to their answer to this question in Magna Carta. In 1340 Edward III had consented to a statute which said that no charge might be imposed on the nation except with the consent of the great men and the commons assembled in parliament. But though the barons had checked the power of the king, they had found no way of themselves giving good government. England had been rescued from the troubles of the fifteenth century by the Tudor kings. But when, in the early seventeenth century, the Stuart King Charles I seemed to be acting for himself rather than for the country, a far stronger instrument than the baron's charter was ready to check him: this instrument was the House of Commons, which represented the mass of middle-class people in England.

Charles I did not make all his troubles. His father James I had already irritated parliament by wanting more money than it would give him; by putting new duties on goods which came into the country, for example, on dried currants; by listening to the advice of men whom they distrusted; and by refusing sympathy to the Puritans, that is to men in the Church of England who wanted more changes from the old way of thinking than had been made in the English Prayer Book. All these troubles were

Rulers of the Stuart House

James I	1603
Charles I	1625-1649
Charles II	1660
James II	1685
William and Mary	1689
Anne	1702-1714

The House of Stuart



passed on to Charles. He was not the man to improve matters, for while he was clear about what he considered right, he had no imagination and could not see another man's point of view; and he did not keep his word. Numbers of men who at first did not want to quarrel, far less to fight, went to the other side when they discovered they could not trust him. Numbers of Puritans, too, left the Church of England and formed sects of their own when they found that the king made no effort to see what they meant.

In 1627 Charles wanted money so badly that he asked certain men to lend him some, and most of them dared not refuse. Five country gentlemen, however, refused to pay; they were thrown into prison. They asked, as they had a right to do, for the reason of their arrest. They were told that it was "by special command of the king"; they said that this answer was against the laws of the land, but the king would not listen. When parliament met, the House of Commons drew up a petition asking the king to promise that no one should be compelled to pay taxes or loans unless parliament had agreed and that no one should be imprisoned except for breaking the laws. Unwillingly the king gave his consent. When the Commons went on to pass resolutions about religion and about duties on imported and exported goods which the king had imposed, he dissolved, that is dismissed, parliament. Eleven years passed before he summoned another. His friends thought that the troubles were over. One wrote, "Here white peace, the beautifullest of things, has fixed her everlasting nest".

But Charles could not live and rule without money, and without taxes granted by parliament enough money he could not get. The rents from crown lands and from recognised customs duties were too little to meet his expenses. After trying other plans, he asked men all over England to pay money for ships to protect the Channel from pirates. In old days the kings of England had by custom been able to call on counties by the sea to give ships to protect the coasts in time of danger. But there was no urgent danger now, and in any case inland counties were not accustomed to pay. John Hampden, whose pleasant house looked out on the Chiltern Hills, refused. He could have afforded the money, but he thought that the king had no right to ask for it. He was imprisoned. Twelve judges were asked if the demand was legal; seven said that it was. But people in England remembered that the judges could be dismissed if the king were displeased, and a great many of them thought that Hampden was right.

Then there were troubles concerned with church matters. The Puritans were growing stronger both inside and outside the Church of England. Charles had no sympathy with them. He belonged to the Church of England, but some men feared that he would favour the Roman Catholics, because his queen, Henrietta Maria, the French king's daughter, was a Roman Catholic. The archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, disliked the Puritans as Charles did. He insisted that all the rules of the Church of England should be kept. He thought that

men ought to be strict about all outward signs of reverence to God and that then they would become really reverent, but the Puritans thought that people who used outward signs would think more of them than of real reverence. For example, in many churches the altars or communion tables stood in such a position that men carelessly put their hats on them; Laud had the altars moved back against the east walls of the churches, with rails in front of them.

Laud also tried to enforce the use of the Prayer Book in Scotland and this angered the Presbyterian Scots. Men who dared to write against what was being done were summoned before the Star Chamber and were fined; sometimes their ears were cut off. The Star Chamber, too, punished printers and importers of books from abroad.

Worse troubles began when the king asked Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, to come to England and help him. Strafford had been ruling for him in Ireland. He was a friend of Laud, and both men were determined to support the king and the Church of England. Neither had any idea how strong was the feeling against them. They thought that if they showed a little determination the country would settle down.

In 1640 the king's need for money was desperate: the Scots had invaded England. He summoned parliament. In November it met. The House of Commons drew up a petition complaining about the bishops and about the "hindering of godly books" from being printed. Then they attacked Laud and Strafford. The archbishop was

imprisoned. Strafford, the king's chief servant, was accused of high treason and tried by the House of Lords.

The trial was held in Westminster Hall. Charles, who had promised not to forsake him, listened behind a lattice; he little guessed who would be the next famous prisoner to stand there on trial for his life. Strafford boldly defended himself. He had served the king and no single one of his acts had been treason. He said, "These gentlemen tell us that they speak in defence of the Commonwealth against any arbitrary laws. Give me leave to say that I speak in defence of the Commonwealth against their arbitrary treason."

As the trial went on, the Commons began to think that Strafford would gain his case. They discussed what should happen. John Pym, a representative for Somersetshire, said that Strafford had been a traitor to the laws of the country. Another member said grimly, "Stone dead hath no fellow"; he meant that if Strafford were killed he could no longer give bad advice or be supported by anybody. It was decided to withdraw the accusations before the Lords and to pass an act of parliament which should declare Strafford a traitor. The bill said that because he had endeavoured "to subvert the ancient and fundamental laws and government of His Majesty's realms of England and Ireland" the Lords and Commons enacted that he was a traitor and must suffer the pain of death. A majority in both Houses passed the bill. No bill could, however, become an act—that is, a law—without the king's consent, and Charles had told Strafford that he would never desert

him. But outside the palace of Whitehall an angry mob had assembled. If news reached them that the king had refused, they might storm the palace. The king was no coward; he feared not for his own life but for the queen's. Rumours of plots had been brought to him. He consented.

Two days later a crowd assembled on Tower Hill to watch Strafford die. He said, "I know how to look death in the face and the people too. I thank God I am no more afraid of death, but as cheerfully put off my doublet at this time as ever I did when I went to bed." He died as bravely as the king who betrayed him was to die eight years afterwards.

For the moment men hoped that their quarrel with Charles himself was ended. They thought it was Strafford's fault that the king had disregarded the laws. Bonfires were lighted; bells rang. "His head is off! His head is off!" shouted those who had ridden to London to see the execution.

The Commons went on with their work. They passed a bill saying that no more than three years must go by without a parliament; they abolished the Star Chamber, the Council of the Marches, and the Council of the North; they declared ship-money illegal. To all these bills, passed by Lords and Commons, the king consented. There were now men in parliament who thought that enough had been done. Just then news came of a dreadful rebellion in Ireland; the king needed troops, but men feared what he would do if he had them. It was decided to make one more great effort to oblige him to keep to the laws. A list

of all the evil things he had done was drawn up in the form of a Grand Remonstrance; there were two hundred and four clauses. The Commons discussed whether they should send the Remonstrance to the king. The debate went on through the dull hours of an afternoon in November. Candles were brought. At midnight the voting was taken, and men sat "in the shadow of death", their hands on their swords, while the numbers were counted. By eleven votes, the Grand Remonstrance was passed.

After that things moved quickly. There were debates in the House about reform of the Church. Charles heard that someone was intending to speak against Henrietta Maria. He sent to the House to arrest five members for treason, among them Hampden and Pym. The House asked for time to consider. Next day it was known that the king intended to fetch the five members himself. At command of the House, they hurriedly left their places. The king entered. There was dead silence. "Is Mr. Pym here?" he asked. No one answered. Charles turned to the Speaker, the chairman, and asked if the five members were present. The Speaker dropped on his knees, in fear and politeness, but he was loyal to the House. "I have neither eyes to see nor tongue to speak in this place", he said, "but as the House is pleased to direct me." "I see", said Charles, "that my birds have flown." In anger, he left the House.

Only a few months later war began. Soon Cromwell came forward as leader. By means of the men whom he strictly trained in his "new model army", and with the

help of the Presbyterian Scots, the king's troops were beaten. The army turned out of parliament those who still wished to treat with him. He was tried in Westminster Hall. In 1649, outside his own palace, Charles Stuart, "that man of blood", was beheaded.

Chapter IX

How parliament gained its victory

For eleven years Charles I ruled without a parliament. For eleven years after his execution the country of William the Conqueror, Henry VIII, and Elizabeth was governed without a king.

Of the four hundred and ninety members chosen in 1640 by the towns and counties of England, some three hundred had died, withdrawn, or been turned out. The small number remaining set to work energetically. They abolished the office of king as "unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous to the liberty, safety, and public interest of the people". They abolished the House of Lords as useless and dangerous. They declared that England should henceforth be governed as a "Commonwealth and Free State by the supreme authority of this nation, the representatives of the people in Parliament". They set up a council of state, each member of which had to take an oath to maintain and defend the public liberty. They repealed all laws which said that people must go to church; the use of the Prayer Book had been abolished

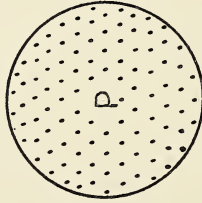
when the Presbyterian Scots had come to help parliament. By this time some of the Scots had taken up arms for Prince Charles, so Cromwell was sent to establish parliamentary rule in Scotland, and he afterwards went to Ireland on the same business.

But parliament discovered, as the barons three hundred years earlier had found, that it is easier to see where other people are wrong than it is to govern. They met all the old difficulties. Money was scarce. Even the land which was seized from the royalists did not provide enough. There were critics within their own ranks. All Puritans now hated the Church of England, but some of them wanted one thing and some another. Every man who had some particular reform to bring forward thought that this was the moment.

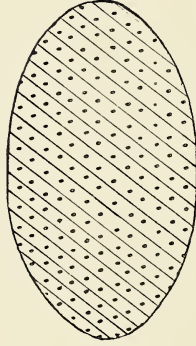
When Cromwell came home from Ireland he found that parliament was doing nothing effective. He wanted a new election. But when he found that the members were making plans by which they should all sit in any new parliament, and have power to turn out other members, his patience gave way. One day, wearing "plain black clothes and grey worsted stockings", he went to the House. For a time he sat quietly. Then he rose, took off his hat and spoke. The astonished members heard what he thought of them. "It is not fit", he exclaimed, "that you should sit here any longer." He turned to a friend and said, "Call them in". Some twenty or thirty musketeers entered. "You are no parliament", Cromwell went on. "I say you are no parliament! Some of you are drunkards;

RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN ENGLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

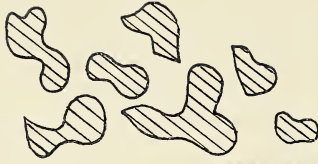
*Roman
Catholic
Church*



*Church
of
England*



*Independent
Puritan
Groups*



*Roman Catholics acknowledged the Pope as their Head.
Puritan groups were Protestant.*

*The Church of England was both Catholic and Protestant.
(The word Puritan was sometimes used of Protestants within
the Church of England.)*

some of you are living in open contempt of God's commandments. . . . Depart, I say; and let us have done with you. In the name of God—go!" He seized the mace from the table and handed it to a musketeer. It was the sign of the Speaker's office. The House quickly emptied. Cromwell and his musketeers came last, and the door was locked. Parliament had been dismissed by a soldier. But nobody minded. Cromwell said, "We did not hear a dog bark at their going".

For five years Cromwell and the army were the real rulers of England. Cromwell was given the title of Lord Protector; some people wanted to make him king. He summoned several parliaments, but he could never get on with them. He agreed to two different constitutions, but neither worked well. He had a council of state, but what was done was really done by the authority of the Lord Protector. As time went on he depended more and more on the army. Englishmen did not like this, and many of them grew tired of the strictness of Puritan rule. The Puritans talked about liberty, but they were sure that what they thought was right, and that everyone else ought to agree with them. They were stern and deeply in earnest. They put down bear-baiting and cock-fights; they stopped May-day sports and the keeping of Christmas.

Cromwell and his council said that people might worship God as they chose, except Roman Catholics and all who belonged to the Church of England. The Prayer Book could only be used in secret. People who belonged to a new group of Christians, called the Society of Friends

or Quakers, were often imprisoned, because it was thought that their teaching encouraged men to resist the government. They went through the country preaching. George Fox, one of their leaders, wrote a diary in which he describes what a bad state the prisons were in, and how the gaolers often went beyond the law in ill-treating the prisoners. Once a Quaker lad of sixteen was put by a gaoler into a hole in the wall of Colchester castle, to which he went up by a ladder. The ladder was six feet too short and he had to climb the rest of the way by a rope. The gaoler made him come down every day for his food and go up again. One day he slipped and fell on the stones below; he was so much hurt that he died soon afterwards. Once Fox himself was in prison with another Quaker, whose wife sent him a cheese from Bristol. "The gaoler took it from him, and carried it to the mayor to search it for treasonable letters, as he said; and though they found no treason in the cheese they kept it from us." Sometimes Fox appealed to the justices of the peace, and occasionally an unjust gaoler was dismissed.

The best of the Puritans wanted men to be free to think and speak as they thought right. The poet Milton was one of them. Besides poetry, Milton wrote an essay about the need that men should think and write freely. He said that truth can take care of itself, and that goodness which cannot bear to hear anything evil is not worth having.

I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary,

but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat.

The prize he speaks of is the knowledge of truth, which is not easily won.

But in practice, the Puritans did not give freedom. Englishmen tired of the rule of the army, and when Cromwell had died they had no patience with his son Richard, the new Protector. Some were ready to fight for Charles, son of Charles I, who was living in Holland. In 1660 he entered London as Charles II, and all the bells rang for joy that a king had come back.

Charles II reigned twenty-five years. Then he died, and his brother James II was king. Three years later, James fled from the country by boat, and nobody tried to stop him. Again a Stuart ruler had failed.

One reason for the failure was that neither Charles nor James knew enough about history; another was that they did not understand Englishmen's character; and another was that though parliament had asserted its right to tax and make laws, nobody yet had found a way by which the king could be prevented from appointing the councillors whom he wanted. The council still saw to the carrying out of laws, and there was no satisfactory way of bringing it under parliamentary control.

At the Restoration of 1660 the Church of England was given its old position and the Prayer Book again was used. But Charles did not know how strongly the Puritans wanted their independence, or, if he knew, he paid no attention. He took little interest in government; one of his

courtiers said that he delighted "in a bewitching pleasure called sauntering". Laws were passed to make everyone come to church, and the Puritans, or Nonconformists as they came to be called, could no more do this than the Church of England people could give up their services in the time of the Commonwealth. Some Puritans were imprisoned for breaking the new laws. John Bunyan was one of them. He wrote his book *Pilgrim's Progress* while he was a prisoner in Bedford gaol.

James II, whose reign began in 1685, was a Roman Catholic. He did not see what a storm of hatred he would bring on himself by encouraging Roman Catholics. He thought he was safe because he was friendly with the great French king Louis XIV; he forgot how bitter the English people would be if they thought their king was helped against them by a foreigner. He tried to keep men as soldiers in time of peace; he forgot what people had felt about Cromwell's rule through the army.

The English had not forgotten the horrors of civil war. A group of important men decided to invite a Protestant, who had the royal blood in his veins, to be king. This was William of Orange, ruler of Holland; his mother was a daughter of Charles I, and he had married a Protestant daughter of James II. He was fighting against Louis XIV of France, who wanted to invade Holland, and he thought that he would be helped in the struggle if he became king of England. But he did not bring forward that reason in England when, in response to an invitation in 1688, he landed in Devonshire. On his banner he had the words

“For the Protestant religion; for a free parliament”; and below them his own proud motto, “I will uphold”. Soon after William landed, James fled.

A meeting of Lords and Commons was summoned, which, because William was not yet king, was called a convention instead of a parliament. It passed two resolutions. This was the first: “That King James II, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of the kingdom by breaking the original contract between king and people, and . . . having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, has abdicated the government, and that the throne is thereby vacant”. The second resolution was: “That it hath been found by experience to be inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince”. The crown of England was offered to William and Mary, daughter of James II.

The new king and queen had to take an oath that they would govern according to the statutes of parliament and the laws and customs of the kingdom; that they would cause law and justice to be done, and that they would maintain the Protestant reformed religion established by law. This oath, with very few changes, has been taken by every monarch of England since, and was taken by George VI when he was crowned in 1937.

Parliament drew up a list of things which James II had done which now were declared illegal. The list was called the Bill of Rights. It was agreed to by William and Mary, and is still the law of the land. These are some of its points:

(1) *That the power of suspending of laws . . . without consent of parliament is illegal.* This meant that no king might say that laws need not be kept. James had drawn up a Declaration of Indulgence, which put aside the laws against Nonconformists and Roman Catholics, and he had ordered all bishops and clergy in charge of a church to read it out from their pulpits on three consecutive Sundays.

(2) *That the power of dispensing with laws . . . is illegal.* This meant that the king might not put aside a law for the sake of some special person. James II had tried to force one of the colleges at Oxford to choose a Roman Catholic as its head. "I am king," he had said, "I will be obeyed. Go to your chapel this instant, and elect [my nominee]." The men who refused were turned out of the positions they held in the college.

(3) *That levying money . . . without consent of parliament for longer time or in other manner than the same is . . . granted is illegal.* This made still more clear the fact insisted upon in 1340 and in Charles I's time that parliament had the right to impose taxation.

(4) *That raising or keeping a standing army in time of peace, unless it be with consent of parliament, is against the law.* The kings of England had never had the right in peace time to keep more than a small guard at different fortresses, such as the "beef-eaters" at the Tower. An act passed by parliament in the same year as the Bill of Rights, that is in 1689, gave the king money for the upkeep of soldiers for one year. Ever since, supplies for the army have been

voted every year. This made it necessary in practice for parliament to meet annually, though it had much less business then than it has now.

A Triennial Act passed a few years later said that there must be an election every three years. This prevented the king from attempting to rule without parliament, and also made it impossible for one parliament to remain in existence too long. Later, the life of a parliament was increased to seven years; now it is five.

By agreeing to these bills William and Mary showed that they knew they were dependent on parliament.

An act was also passed to meet the needs of Protestant Nonconformists. It was called the Toleration Act, and it said that they might have their own chapels and services, but it did not allow them to hold government offices or to be mayors of towns or members of parliament. Roman Catholics were given no toleration at all.

The fear which Englishmen felt of Roman Catholics is seen again in the Act of Settlement, passed in 1701. The act arranged that the crown of England should never go back to the direct line of Stuart kings and should never be worn by a Roman Catholic. After William's death, his wife's sister Anne, a Protestant, should reign, and if she died without children the crown should pass to a Protestant granddaughter of James I, the Electress Sophia of Hanover. She never reigned, but her son became George I. King George VI is his descendant.

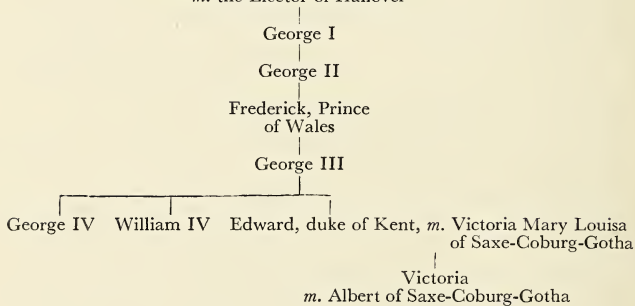
The Act of Settlement also limited the power of the king by saying that he might not dismiss the judges if they

Rulers of the House of Hanover

George I	1714
George II	1727
George III	1760
George IV	1820
William IV	1830-1837
Victoria	1837-1901

The House of Hanover

Sophia (granddaughter of James I),
m. the Elector of Hanover



did not do as he wished. They were to hold office for life unless parliament asked the king to dismiss them.

The change from James II and his customs to William and Mary and theirs is called the English Revolution. The Revolution limited the power of the king, as Englishmen for nearly five hundred years had been trying to limit it. Magna Carta had failed; the Petition of Right in 1628 had failed; the Bill of Rights and the other acts passed under William and Mary succeeded.

Yet the Revolution showed clearly that Englishmen wanted a king: to the kings in the past the land had owed peace; the only attempt at government without one had ended in failure. The king was there, but he could never again try to rule without parliament, because from parliament came his right to the throne.

According to strict descent James II did not cease to be king by his flight. Some people still recognised him and drank toasts to "the king over the water". When he died, such people looked to his son James, the Old Pretender, and after the Old Pretender's death to his son, "Bonnie Prince Charlie". That neither the Old Pretender nor the Young Pretender became king was due to the fact that parliament had decided against them. So even if they had wished to do so, neither William III nor Anne nor George I nor his descendants could have dared to set aside the wishes of parliament. To parliament they owed their position. The king was under the law.

Chapter X

How parliament controls the king's ministers

George VI is king because the crown passed to the heirs of the Electress Sophia by the Act of Settlement. Judges still hold office under the arrangements made by the act. But some of its clauses were only in force a few years, such as one which said that no king might go out of the British Isles unless parliament gave him leave.

Another clause which was soon repealed said that all matters which by custom belonged to the council, or privy council as it was now called, must be settled by it, and that privy councillors must sign their names to every decision for which they were responsible.

The position of the king's councillors was puzzling to parliament. It was his right to appoint them. Like all men who did special work in government, they were his servants. Strafford had been beheaded because there was no other way to prevent the king from listening to him. Charles II had sometimes employed men whom parliament distrusted; he had said that a king who might have his ministers called to account was only a king in name. Once, when his treasurer had been accused by the Commons of treason and condemned by the Lords, Charles had pardoned the minister.

The question was all the more difficult because it was never certain what group of men the king would consult. In the great days of the council, under the Tudors, the

number of councillors had varied. Sometimes, too, the plan had been tried of giving special work to committees. In the seventeenth century this plan was often used, and some of the committees, such as that for foreign affairs, became permanent. New officials, too, were appointed as business grew, and sometimes the king consulted a few of them without referring to the council or its committees. Charles II had once plainly told his privy council that it was too large a body for business. "His Majesty thanks you for all the good advice which you have given him, which might have been more frequent if the great number of the council had not made it unfit for the secrecy and dispatch of business. This forced him to use a smaller number of you in a foreign committee, and sometimes the advice of a few among them."

The king's argument was good; it is clear that a small group can work more quickly and privately than a large one. Yet the smaller and less formal the group, the harder it was for parliament to control the king's choice of advisers. The clause in the Act of Settlement about councillors' signatures was a clumsy way of finding out who might be blamed if decisions worked badly. Councillors naturally did not like putting their signatures, and many decisions were not made by the council at all, so the plan was a failure. In the end the problem was solved, not through any one brilliant idea, but by the slow growth of a new institution which developed almost by accident. Parliament and the English people at last found someone to grumble at, and a way to get rid of unpopular ministers

which was less exciting and less uncomfortable than by execution. Whatever he pretends he would like in his private heart, no one expects to see the prime minister or any member of the government beheaded on Tower Hill.

The institution which solved the problem was the cabinet, with its leader the prime minister. It is the cabinet that we mean to-day when we speak in a special sense of the "government". The cabinet is a kind of committee of ministers, the members of which are chosen by the prime minister. He holds office only so long as parliament wishes.

The word minister in its original sense means servant. The ministers have always been the king's servants; they are now the people who carry on the government of the realm in his name. The word prime is from the Latin word *primus*, which means first. So the prime minister is the first or chief of the king's servants.

In the time of William the Conqueror the justiciar, who presided in the *curia* when the king was away, was the chief officer of state. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the chancellor, who had originally been the king's secretary, was the leading man in the council. His title came from a Latin word which means screens, because at one time the chancellor and his clerks sat behind screens doing their work. In the time of the Tudors the chancellor had a great deal of other work to do, particularly in the law courts, of some of which he was then the head; he was also chairman of the House of Lords, which could be looked on as the descendant of the

big form of the *curia regis*. Another man was appointed as president of the council, and the king's public writing was done for him by an official known as the secretary. In the time of Charles I there were two secretaries. So the servants of the king grew in number and their work changed, but there was still no prime minister. The king still appointed his servants and did a great deal of public business himself.

Charles II, whose pleasure was sauntering, left more of the work to his ministers, and in his reign more committees were used. William III worked hard himself, and so did Queen Anne, but when in 1714 George I came from Hanover in Germany, England had a king who could not speak her language. He knew very little about English affairs, and naturally his ministers carried on business without him. Some people still longingly thought of the Stuarts: all through his reign George felt that his throne was a "rocking-chair", and that he might easily be tipped off. His ministers, therefore, were appointed from the party in England which strongly supported him and his son George II. This party was called the Whigs.

Among the Whigs were a number of the rich landowners in the country; they sat in the House of Lords and they had a great deal of influence over the House of Commons. For about fifty years Whig landowners really ruled England. They were still the king's servants, and in practice they did most of the work of government. There was usually a leader among them, and he came to be called the prime minister.

In 1760 a new reign began. George III felt himself an Englishman, and he wanted to rule as English kings had ruled in old days. "Born and educated in this country," he said, "I glory in the name of Briton." He could not, of course, put parliament on one side, but he appointed ministers who, he thought, would be truly his servants. Many of these he chose from among the men whose fathers had wanted to have the Stuarts back; they were loyal to George III, and eager to have power instead of the Whigs. They were called Tories, a name which had first been given to a group of men in the time of Charles II. By giving rewards, especially titles and offices, the king tried to build up in the Lords and Commons a group of men who would always support him. He called them the "King's Friends". He used to send messages to the House of Commons to tell his "Friends" which way to vote.

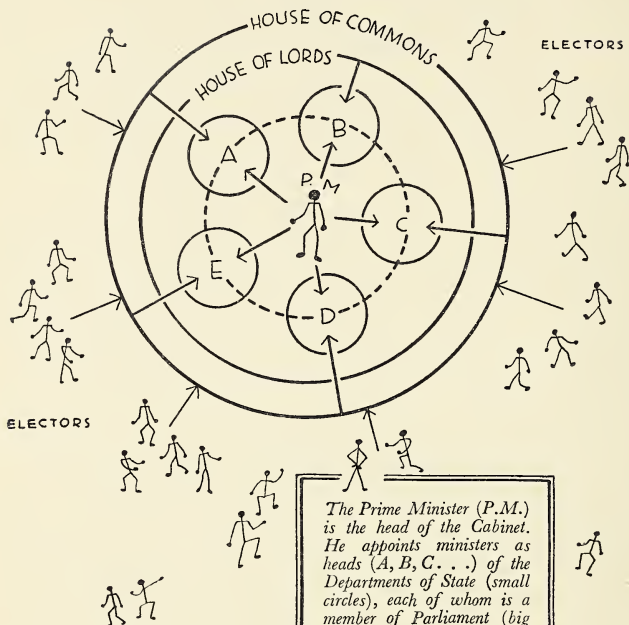
But in 1783 George chose as prime minister a man who was to prove himself stronger than the king. This was William Pitt, son of the famous man of the same name who had sent Wolfe to Canada and supported Clive in India. When he was seven years old he determined some day to sit in the House of Commons; when he was thirteen he wrote a play about politics; and when he was twenty-four he was prime minister of England. He won the support of the House of Commons, not by bribery but by showing men what he could do. He brought to an end the "King's Friends", because the king learned to trust him and to see that such plans were unnecessary. He drew together the Tory party, and he insisted that ministers

who would not work with him should resign. George III became ill, and, though a regent was appointed, it was Pitt who went on with the work. In the early years of the wars with France at the time of the French Revolution and under Napoleon, it was Pitt who ruled England. Men called him "the pilot who weathered the storm", though he died in 1806. Napoleon was not yet beaten, but Pitt had lived to see Nelson's victory at Trafalgar.

The position of prime minister and the powers of the cabinet were not exactly the same in Pitt's time as they are now. The constitution of England has never been exactly the same for a hundred years. Like a living thing, it is always changing. But if Pitt could attend a cabinet meeting to-day he would recognise the descendant of the meetings he held.

The prime minister is still appointed by the king. He has to go to Buckingham Palace or Windsor or wherever the king may be to kiss the king's hand. But by custom the king must appoint him from the party which has most members in the House of Commons, and the members are chosen at the elections by the people of Britain; so in a general sense the people choose the prime minister. There are three parties now: the Conservatives, who may be called the descendants of the Tories; the Liberals, who may be called descendants of the Whigs; and the Labour party or Socialists, who became a party at the end of the nineteenth century. If there is more than one suitable leader in the party which has the majority in the House of Commons, the king chooses between them.

THE CABINET SYSTEM



The Prime Minister (P.M.) is the head of the Cabinet. He appoints ministers as heads (A, B, C. . .) of the Departments of State (small circles), each of whom is a member of Parliament (big circles).

The Cabinet consists of the heads of the chief Departments, and is thus represented by the broken circle.

Actually there are many more Departments than are shown here, and there are also more members of the Cabinet.

The prime minister always becomes a member of the privy council and takes the councillors' oath to be loyal to the king. He also holds some other office. For example, when Ramsay MacDonald was prime minister in 1924 he was also secretary for foreign affairs. The prime minister must always be a member of parliament, and it is usual now for him to belong to the House of Commons. In whichever House he sits, he is its leader.

As soon as a new prime minister is appointed, he has to choose men who belong to his party and sit in parliament to take charge of different sides of the government's work; that is, to be heads of the great departments of state. There are many more departments of state now than there were in Pitt's time, for public work has greatly increased. The prime minister has to choose a lord chancellor to be head of the law courts; a chancellor of the exchequer to be head of the department that collects taxes; a secretary of state for home affairs, one for foreign affairs, one for Commonwealth relations, one for the colonies, one for war, one for Scotland, one for air; a first lord of the admiralty, a minister of health, a minister of education, and a number of other ministers. Eighteen or twenty of these heads of departments form the cabinet, and so are responsible not only for the business of their own departments but for the general discussion of the nation's affairs.

When a decision is reached, every member of the cabinet is held responsible for it. No one may say, "I disapproved", or "I was absent that day and had nothing to do with the matter". If anyone disagrees so strongly on

an important point that he feels it is impossible to share the responsibility of suggesting it to parliament, then he must resign from the office he holds. As long as he is in the cabinet he must never let it be known that he disagrees with its policy.¹ He must not talk about the discussions, for cabinet meetings are private. The newspapers do not know and so cannot print what the different members said. All members of the cabinet are made privy councillors and take the oath of allegiance and secrecy.

The privy council still carries on formal business, but the cabinet has taken its place as the most important group of men in the government of the country. The king does not attend cabinet meetings, though the prime minister lets him know their decisions. If the ghosts of the kings of England could attend a cabinet meeting in Downing Street, William the Conqueror, Henry VIII, and Charles I would be quite as much surprised at what they would find as the present prime minister would be to see them.

Chapter XI

How the vote was given to everyone

Once every five years at least there is a general election. Writs are issued; that is, orders are sent out in the name of the king to the sheriffs of counties and the mayors of towns to see that arrangements are made, and these arrangements are carried out by officials all over the

¹ In 1932 an exception was made in the National cabinet.

country. The date of the poll (pronounced pole) is announced and the places where it is to be held; often a school is chosen, so that on polling day the children who go there must have a holiday.

Every man and woman over twenty-one whose name is on the register has a vote, and almost everyone in Britain who has a settled home is entitled to have his name on the register. Copies of the lists of electors (voters) are hung up in post-offices each year for correction if necessary.

When the day comes, everyone may go to the polling station at the time which suits him. A policeman usually stands near the door to see that there is no disorder. Inside a man sits with a copy of the register; he asks the elector his or her name, and puts a mark through it on the list so that no one shall vote more than once. Then he gives the elector a voting paper on which the names of the candidates who stand for election are printed. A number of little screens have been put up in the room; the elector goes behind one of the screens where he finds a place to write at and a pencil; there, privately, he puts a cross on the paper against the name of the person for whom he wishes to vote. He folds the paper in half, comes out from behind the screen, and drops the paper into a closed box with a slit at the top. Nobody sees where he has put the cross, and he does not sign the paper. When the votes are counted no one will know what vote any elector has given—and he need tell no one.

This plan of secret voting, called voting by ballot, has only been used since 1872. Before that time, an elector

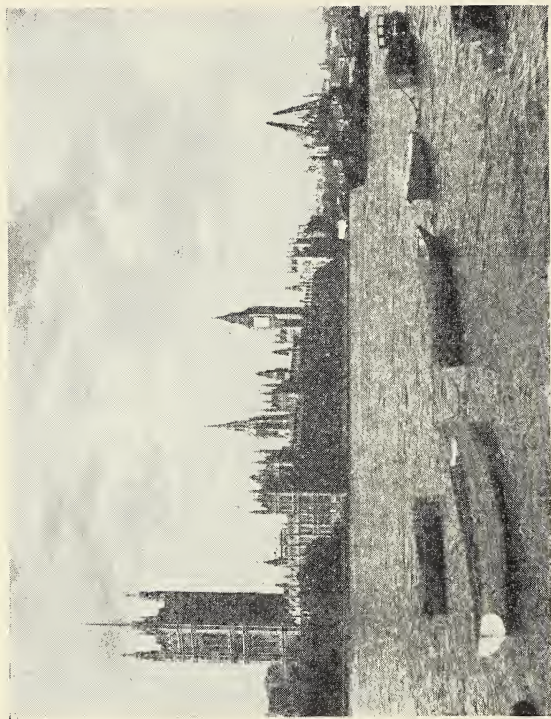
had to go up on a platform and call the name of the candidate for whom he voted. Everyone listening could hear. Even if there was no horseplay from rough men at the time, electors might suffer afterwards; a liberal shop-owner, for example, might be unfair to an assistant who had voted conservative, or a conservative farmer might turn a liberal labourer out of his cottage.

The candidates whose names are on the voting paper will usually belong to one of the three great parties: conservative, liberal, or labour; a few candidates do not belong to any party and stand as "independent". Any British man or woman, from any part of the Commonwealth, may stand for election if he is not a bankrupt, a lunatic, a criminal, a man qualified for the House of Lords, a holder of certain offices, or a clergyman of the Church of England or the Church of Scotland. The reason why clergymen of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland may not sit is that some of them are appointed by the lord chancellor, in the name of the king, and it was thought that men who depended for their living on a crown appointment might vote as the king told them; the act disqualifying them was passed soon after George III had tried to strengthen himself by the "King's Friends". Nonconformist clergy, who are never appointed by the lord chancellor, can sit. The law says nothing about the age of candidates. Until 1858 every member had to own land; then that qualification was abolished. A man or woman who stands for election has to deposit £150, which is returned if he gains one-eighth of the votes polled, but

not if he gains fewer. This prevents candidates from coming forward merely for fun. The candidates belonging to the three great parties are chosen by the party organisation in each district, which has its own committee and chairman, and funds to help in the expenses of the election.

These parties keep the same names from year to year and the same general principles, but when different questions come up from time to time different generations of men will naturally have to decide their own plans. The labour or socialist party thinks that the condition of the working men of the country would be better if the government were the chief employer of labour; the conservative party believes in gradual changes; the liberal party has often encouraged reforms. But every English man and woman must find out the plans of each party in his own day, and think out the best way of voting. He must hear speeches and read books and newspapers on both sides and learn to judge for himself.

By their votes the ordinary people of Britain choose the members of the House of Commons; from the leaders of the party which has the majority in the House, the king chooses the prime minister; the prime minister chooses from the same party the heads of the departments of state and the cabinet; the cabinet decide what bills they will propose to the House of Commons; when the bills are passed by the Commons and by the Lords and have received the king's consent, they become acts and part of the law of the land. If the Commons reject an important bill the prime minister and the cabinet resign. Then, even



The Houses of Parliament

if parliament's five years' life is not over, there will be a general election; and the choice of representatives will again be made by the ordinary people.

This, in a general sense, has been the plan in England at least since the time of the younger Pitt. But in his days no one in the counties might vote unless he owned land. In those towns which sent members, the franchise—that is, the right to vote—varied. Sometimes the only voters were the mayor and the town council; sometimes every pot-walloper—that is, every man who had a hearth where he could boil his own cooking pot—had the franchise; sometimes the voters were men who held houses of a particular value. Sometimes the landowner on whose land the town stood chose its members; sometimes he bought the citizens' votes for money and used them all for a friend; in some towns men sold their votes to the highest bidder.

Pitt himself saw the need for reforms, but nothing was done in his time. The French Revolution made English people fear changes, and soon they were giving their thoughts to the war with France. Meanwhile, the use of steam and of machinery led to the shifting of population and the growth of towns in the north. The new towns had no members, and many of the old towns had become unimportant; one which had once been a flourishing port had been swallowed up by the sea. After Napoleon had been defeated and there had been time to settle down, new proposals were made for reforms.

There was a fierce struggle. The Tories said that the plan by which a landowner could return a man for a town

made it possible for young men to be given their chance; they pointed out that under the old system the war had been won; they argued that owners of land were the proper people to choose the representatives of the nation. The Whigs said that the middle classes who had become wealthy by trade ought also to vote, and that the manufacturing towns ought to send members. In 1830, for the first time since the French wars began, the Whigs had the majority in the House of Commons. They brought in a reform bill. Macaulay (who wrote *Horatius*), a Whig, spoke in its favour. He said that to give all men the vote would "produce a destructive revolution", but that to give it to middle-class people who had money but did not own land would preserve English institutions. "We say, and we say justly, that it is not by mere numbers, but by property and intelligence that the nation ought to be governed." The argument that the present system was ancient, he declared, was no defence. "It is now time for us to pay a decent, a rational, a manly reverence to our ancestors, not by superstitiously adhering to what they in other circumstances did, but by doing what they in our circumstances, would have done."

For seven nights the debate went on; then in the first important stage of voting, the vote on its second reading, the bill passed by a single vote. By custom it had then to be less formally discussed before the third reading, and after this discussion it was defeated. The king, George IV, on the advice of Lord Grey, the prime minister, dissolved parliament. Writs for a new election were issued. Mean-

while, up and down the country meetings had been held and petitions signed. There were few daily papers and news travelled slowly, for in most parts of England there were no railways. But everywhere there was excitement. "The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill", was the election cry of the Whigs. In the new House of Commons they had a majority of more than a hundred. A bill much like the old one passed all three readings.

By custom, the bill which the Commons had passed went on to the House of Lords. For five nights the Lords debated. On the fifth, as the October daylight began to appear, the voting was taken. The bill was rejected.

Then a new bill, with some changes, was drafted; it was passed by the Commons; its second reading was passed by the Lords; then came a stop. It was known that before the third reading the Lords proposed to make certain changes. Disorder broke out in the country. In London the mob smashed the windows of the Duke of Wellington's house and tried to un-horse him as he rode through the City: they thought of him not as the victor at Waterloo but as the Tory leader. In Birmingham there was a threat to refuse to pay taxes. In Bristol men burnt the house of their own mayor. The king decided that he would exercise his old right to create new peers; that is, he would add new men to the House of Lords who would vote for the bill. But the Duke of Wellington saw that if the king used this plan now he might use it again. He therefore gave way and advised Tory lords not to vote at the third reading. So in 1832 the bill became the Reform Act.

The act allowed men in the counties who rented, though they did not own, land of a certain value to vote, and it gave the franchise in towns to all men who occupied houses worth a certain sum yearly; from some small towns it took away the power to send members; it said that other towns might send one member instead of two, and gave members to a number of towns which had not sent any. Its general effect was to give the chief influence in elections to the middle-class men of the country.

In 1867, thirty-five years after the first reform act, another was passed when a Tory cabinet was in power. It gave the vote to the working men of the towns. So uncertain were people where this would lead that it was called the "leap in the dark". But the country soon found that working men were as sensible as anyone else.

In 1884 the working men of the country districts were enfranchised, and ploughmen and shepherds could vote. In 1918 certain women over thirty were enfranchised. In all these acts changes also were made in the constituencies; that is, in the districts entitled to send one or more members to parliament. Such changes will always have to be made from time to time, for population shifts, and unless constituencies are roughly of the same size, one vote differs in value from another. In 1928 a new Franchise Act gave the right to vote to every sane English man and woman in the country who has a fixed place to live in and has reached his or her twenty-first birthday—except peers and criminals.

Chapter XII

How Englishmen pay for government

Everyone, from King George to a schoolboy, wants money. Money is certainly not the most important thing in the world, but it is a thing everyone needs. Governments need it for keeping the peace, for protecting the country, and for providing necessities such as education for children. The more work a government undertakes the more money it needs, though it does not follow that the more there is done for people the more they are willing to pay. Some people talk as though they thought that the cabinet had a private money-box into which the prime minister need only put his hand to draw out gold: they forget that every penny the government spends comes out of somebody's pocket. The king, it is true, still has some of the lands from which kings of the middle ages drew a large part of their income, but money which comes from these lands is paid into public funds and then a certain sum is granted by parliament to the king for his private income and for the royal family. The arrangement was made in George III's reign. The grant is called the Civil List; its amount is less than the king would have if he kept the whole income from crown lands.

William the Conqueror's income was partly from lands and partly from irregular payments made by tenants-in-chief for their holdings; this second source of royal income came to end in the time of Charles II. The Conqueror and

his successors also obtained money from law courts, but such money is now used for the expenses of justice itself and is not part of the general public revenue. Early kings also received duties, called customs, on goods taken into and out of the country; one of the important things done by the parliaments of Edward I was to fix the amount which the king might take on the exports or imports of wool, hides, and wine. All customs dues are now fixed by parliament, and are part of the nation's income. English kings from the end of the tenth century have also from time to time been allowed, by the *witan*, the *curia regis*, or parliament, to demand sums of money for public expenses from everyone who can pay. These sums are called taxes. The first general tax in England was taken to pay to the Danes so that they should stop burning houses and harrying the land.

The king's need for money combined with the English dislike of paying has been one cause of the growth of the constitution. Magna Carta insisted that the king should not take more than was fair. Edward I summoned representatives from counties and towns that they might make him grants. Edward III had to agree that the Commons should consent to taxation. John Hampden refused to pay ship money. Lack of money forced Charles I to summon the parliament which afterwards fought with him. The one public matter which interests even the dullest Englishman now is the amount which he must pay in taxes. Once every year, usually in April, people eagerly turn on the radio to hear about the Budget.

The Budget is the statement made by the chancellor of the exchequer in the House of Commons about the taxes he thinks are necessary. The department of government which deals with money is called the treasury, and its head is called the first lord of the treasury, but the task of proposing how money shall be found belongs to the chancellor of the exchequer. In the twelfth century the king's officers marked the sums paid to the king on a chequer board, ruled into columns; now the chancellor of the exchequer has to study the nation's account books and compare receipts with expenditure. Then he explains his plans to the House; his speech may last four or five hours. The proposals are put into the form of a bill which, like other bills, must be read three times in the House and be also less formally discussed "in committee". Unlike other bills, the finance bill need not be passed by the House of Lords but only needs the king's formal approval. When he has assented it becomes law, and the taxes are collected.

Taxes are both direct and indirect. A direct tax is taken on something that people own, and they cannot avoid it however much they hate paying. The most important direct tax is the income tax which is paid by everyone whose yearly income is more than a certain fixed sum. Every year people have to fill in forms which show exactly how much they receive from earnings or money invested. Later, a government official tells them how much they must pay, and afterwards they send in the money. During the second World War it was decided that it would be convenient for wage-earners and for the govern-

ment too if employers week by week deducted from wages the amount due as income tax and paid the money in lump sums to the tax-collectors. The arrangement made to put this idea into practice was called P.A.Y.E.—Pay As You Earn. Another direct tax is paid on money and land left when people die; its rate, and the rate of income tax too, is higher on great sums than on small.

An indirect tax is arranged by asking people to pay more for certain goods than these would otherwise cost and handing the extra money so gained to the government. Indirect taxes may in theory be avoided by anyone who decides not to buy these goods, though in practice it would be hard for any Englishman to pay no indirect taxes, for the government takes part of the money he spends, for example, on beer, tobacco, and tea. Under indirect taxes are included licences to have certain possessions, for example, a wireless set or a dog. Suggestions for indirect as well as direct taxes are made in the Budget.

In suggesting indirect taxation the chancellor of the exchequer has to consider a number of other points besides the question of revenue. He has to think whether the tax would be bad for the mass of the people. From the reign of William and Mary until 1851, in the reign of Victoria, a tax on windows was from time to time taken; it was specially heavy when money was needed for the wars with Napoleon. The result was that in older houses windows were blocked up and new buildings were put up with as few openings as possible; passages, cellars, and roofs were left without ventilation and, that payment of tax might be

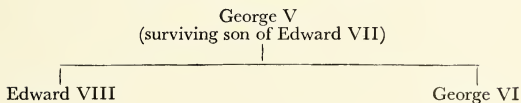
Rulers from Queen Victoria

Victoria	1837
Edward VII	1901
George V	1910
Edward VIII	1936 (abdicated)
George VI	1936

The House of Saxe-Coburg

Edward VII
(eldest son of Victoria)

The House of Windsor (name of House changed by George V)



avoided, hundreds of people lived with too little light and air. In the early nineteenth century there were taxes on things which everyone had to use, for example, salt, soap, candles, paper, leather; and on corn and many other food-stuffs brought from overseas. In 1833 it was calculated that a labourer who earned £22 : 10s. a year might have to pay £11 : 7 : 7 in taxes.

Taxes upon every article which enters into the mouth or covers the back or is placed under the foot. Taxes upon everything which it is pleasant to see, hear, feel, taste, or smell . . . The schoolboy whips his taxed top; the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed bridle on a taxed road; and the dying Englishman, pouring his medicine which has paid 7 per cent into a spoon which has paid 15 per cent, flings himself back upon his chintz bed which has paid 22 per cent and expires. . . . His virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble, and he will then be gathered to his fathers to be taxed no more.

During and after the Napoleonic wars heavy duties were put on imported corn. Some people objected to them, but the Tories and some of the Whigs approved. In 1838 an Anti-Corn Law League was founded whose members pledged themselves to work to have the Corn Laws abolished. Eight years later the Tory leader, Sir Robert Peel, to the surprise of his followers, brought forward a bill to end them, and it was passed. He acted then because the year earlier, in 1845, the potato crop in Ireland and Northern Europe had failed. The poor Irish had used potatoes as their chief food, and now they were starving. Corn was scarce in England on account of bad weather, and it could only be imported at heavy expense.

So the Irish famine led to the repeal of the corn laws, and this to the adoption of a policy of free trade.

The corn laws had been supported partly for the sake of the farmers and landowners who liked to get a high price for their wheat. The idea of helping home industries by keeping out goods from abroad is another point which has to be considered when indirect taxation is discussed. The United States of America and all the big countries of Europe put heavy dues, called tariffs, on most of the goods taken over their boundaries from other countries. Since the time of Sir Robert Peel, England has had fewer such dues than any other land. On some kinds of goods England makes foreign countries pay dues while countries within the Commonwealth may send them in free or pay very little. Usually when dues on imports are paid, the people who buy must pay more for their purchases—their nylon stockings or their scent or their cameras—and so they are taking their share in providing money to govern the country. Without money the government could not pay old age pensions, or unemployment insurance, or pensions to soldiers' widows; it could not keep up the army and navy and air force; nor pay England's contribution to the United Nations; nor provide schools.

The whole of the money needed for these and similar purposes does not come from the taxes. A small amount is provided on the plan of insurance, by which people pay a little every week or year to a fund in order that they may have benefit when they need it; old age pensions, for example, and teachers' pensions are partly paid for in this

way. A great deal of money for public purposes, too, is raised or spent not by the government but by local authorities. County councils and borough councils, for example, are allowed to levy payments called rates, and these payments are used for local expenses. Schools are paid for partly from taxes, for the government must make sure that all children are educated, and partly from rates, for the people in any particular county or town will have special needs.

Rates, that is payments locally levied on local householders for local purposes, were first levied in Elizabeth's reign, when justices of the peace were allowed to demand payment of money to help the unemployed, but poor rate is not now separately paid. All rates have to be paid by house-holders in proportion to the value of their houses. Sometimes the landlord, not the tenant, pays rates, but then the amount of the rent he receives will be accordingly greater. The rate at which payment must be made is fixed by a local council each year in accordance with the needs of the district.

Street-lighting and paving, drainage, water supply and collection of house refuse, town halls and sometimes free libraries, are paid for out of the rates. A council arranges for the provision of all these things; it used to employ private companies to supply some of them.

The payment of taxes and rates is compulsory. Central and local governments must have money and everyone must give his share. But there is another way in which an ordinary man may help to supply public funds if he

chooses. Sometimes an extra sum of money is needed for a special purpose. Then the government may issue a loan, that is, may say to people, "If you will lend your money to help to pay (say) for the war, we will promise to pay you interest as long as we have the use of it". The man who lends the money knows that the interest will be paid to him, and the government gets the lump sum that it needs; it will pay the interest yearly out of the taxes, and out of them too it puts by something every year from which by degrees it will be able to pay back the loan. A town council may borrow money in the same kind of way, paying interest out of the rates.

The ready money which the government needs for ordinary expenses it gets from the Bank of England. It uses the Bank of England as people who do not spend all they earn every week use ordinary banks. People whose salaries are paid by the month or quarter, and people like the owners of shops who take money every day and need to have somewhere to keep it, nearly always use banks. The bank takes care of the money and lets the owner have as much of it as he wants on request; in return for its trouble the bank can use some of the money which is lent to it, for all the people who have lent money will never, in normal times, ask for it back on one day. So the Bank of England is the government's bank and the governor or head of the Bank of England is an extremely important man. Only since 1945 has the Bank been public property, but it has done government business ever since it was begun in the reign of William and Mary. The Bank of

England, too, does business with all the other banks of the country. Since 1930 it has joined with the banks of other lands to consider matters which affect them all in a bank for international settlements. Yet the Bank of England touches the life of the ordinary Englishman every day, for it issues bank-notes: £1 notes and 10s. notes are only paper, but they can be used as if they were gold because of arrangements made by the Bank with the government.

Chapter XIII

The management of local affairs

English villages are older than the kingdom of England. There were frank-pledge groups before there was a police force. There were hundred courts and shire courts before there were royal courts sitting in London. There were J.P.'s loaded with stacks of statutes before work was done under the control of a central department of state like the ministry of education. The men who resisted the Stuarts in parliament had learned to manage their own affairs in their own countryside.

There were times in England when men from different parts of the country spoke such different dialects that they could hardly understand one another. London was granted privileges by Henry I when men of London looked on men of (say) Norwich as foreigners. Craft guilds in towns made their own rules about hours and wages before anyone thought of passing such laws for the country.

Englishmen have always liked to manage their own affairs and they have always loved the particular part of the country to which they belong. The poet Drinkwater writes of the lanes of Warwickshire, Rupert Brooke of Cambridgeshire villages, and Rudyard Kipling of

a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea.

To manage his own affairs in his own town or county is proper to an Englishman. Local government of some kind he has always known.

But it is only for about a hundred years that towns have been governed on the same general plan as is used now, and it is less than seventy years since the invention of county councils.

The improvement of town government was one of the good deeds of the first parliament elected after the Reform Act of 1832. Improvement was certainly needed. In some towns the election of councillors had been given up; the members of the town council held office for life, and when one died the rest chose someone to take his place. In Plymouth, where 75,000 people lived, only 437 men had the right to vote for the mayor and council, and of those 145 did not live in the town. At Cambridge the councillors used part of the money gained from town lands on an annual dinner and spent the rest on their private affairs. At Coventry land had been given to the town for a school; in 1833 there was only one pupil, with two masters who divided £700 between them.

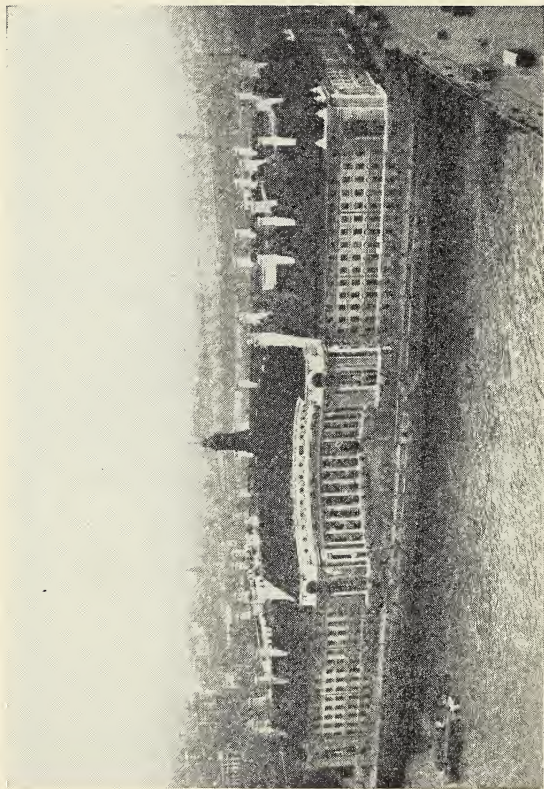
In 1835 parliament passed an act called the Municipal Reform Act. It made rules about town government, most of which are still in force. Town councils consist of a mayor, aldermen, and councillors. The councillors are elected for three years by all townspeople of full age; in 1835 the electors had all to be ratepayers. The aldermen are elected by the councillors for six years. Councillors and aldermen elect the lord mayor or mayor who holds office for one year. The usual day for the election of mayors is November 9. All Londoners know that that is Lord Mayor's Day, for there is always a procession then from the Mansion House, where the lord mayor lives, to the law courts in the Strand, where he is finally admitted to office.

In country places a great deal of the work of government was done in the nineteenth century, as it had been for three hundred years, by the justices of the peace. But as Queen Victoria's reign went on and both liberal and conservative statesmen tried to improve conditions of life, new work was attempted both in the towns and the country. Middle-class people had become accustomed to voting for members of parliament and naturally wanted also to choose men for local work, so new elected councils were formed to undertake the new duties.

The first of these was the board of guardians, set up to carry out a new law about the relief of the poor which was passed in 1834, three years before Victoria became queen. The parishes, which since Elizabeth's time had been the unit or smallest area for which poor relief was organised,

were put together into larger groups called unions. In each union there was a board of guardians; that is, a committee to see that arrangements for the relief of the poor were made. All J.P.'s were members of the board, but the rest of the members were elected by the rate-payers. In each union a workhouse was set up which in some places is still called the Union. A group of men in London was appointed to supervise the local committees. Boards of guardians did important work for a hundred years, but in 1930 they came to an end.

Newer work than the guardians' was given in 1848 to local councils called boards of health or sanitary authorities. This was the first time that an act of parliament had been passed to improve the general health of the country. For twenty years a few doctors and far-seeing men had been trying to improve conditions; a great many people did not know the effect of dirt and bad air, and some did not want to learn. Streets were not cleaned, windows not opened, many towns had no proper drainage and no regular water supply. In one part of Westminster in 1844 there was one tap to supply sixteen houses, and on Sunday, the day when the women did most of the cleaning, it was turned on for five minutes. It was calculated in London that a family of five of the best type of working people could get under twenty gallons a day, of which ten were used for cooking and personal washing, and ten for washing the rooms, washing the linen, and watering the flowers. Now people who are not at all extravagant use more than twenty gallons each every day.



County Hall, the headquarters of the London County Council

After 1848 sanitary authorities, which in the towns might be the town councils, were elected to look after drainage and water supply. A central board in London had to see that they did their work.

Some years later, in 1870, new local committees were created called school boards. It was their business to set up schools in places where private societies such as the National Society had not provided enough. These schools came to be known as board schools. The letters L.S.B., standing for London School Board, are still on the walls of some school buildings in London. The school boards were also controlled by a central committee.

By the year 1888 there were so many local committees, so many elections, and so much overlapping of work that a new plan was tried. County councils were elected and made responsible for local government in each county in England, though they could not interfere with big towns. London, because of its size, was treated as a county itself. Most of the work done by the J.P.'s, apart from the holding of courts, was given to the new councils. Some of the old councils went on, so at first there was a larger number of councils than ever, but the county councils have done their work so well that more and more has been handed over to them. In 1902 the school boards were brought to an end, and the county councils took charge of public education. In 1930 they took the place of boards of guardians as poor-law authorities. They have the general supervision of public health. They look after main roads and rivers and, with the justices, they pro-

vide and control the police. As the J.P. was the man-of-all-work for Tudor governments, so to-day the county councils, and councils for smaller areas which are subordinate to them, are councils-of-all-work, in which cabinets "place their special trust".

The county councils have power to raise rates and, within limits, to issue loans, and all the public work of their own county is controlled by them, outside the largest towns. Smaller towns which manage most of their own affairs have town or borough councils. Smaller towns still are included in divisions of counties called urban districts, and country villages are grouped in divisions of counties called rural districts, each district electing its council. In each village there is a parish council elected by the inhabitants, and in some there is a parish meeting of which all the adults of the village are members.

It is easy for anyone to find out about the local government of the place where he lives. Water carts and roadmen's tools which are owned by a council are stamped with initials; regulations signed on behalf of a council are put up in parks and on commons; notices of council meetings may be displayed in a church porch. Everyone who goes to a school in England where fees are not paid has his books and pens provided for him by a council, though some school buildings still belong to a private society. The local education authority, often called the L.E.A., is always a council, either the county council or one of the others. About half the money for the schools owned or helped by the L.E.A. comes from the rates. The

other half comes from the taxes, and is paid by arrangement with a central department of government in London, the ministry of education.

The ministry of education has general control over the work of the councils in education. New schools, for example, must not be built by an L.E.A. unless the ministry of education approves, and both the ministry and the L.E.A. may send inspectors into schools to see that everything is going on well. In the same way, the ministry of health has general control over the sanitary work of the councils; the ministry of labour has general control over local labour exchanges; and the ministry of agriculture and fisheries deals with such matters as the encouragement of new crops like sugar beet, and the prevention and stamping out of foot-and-mouth disease among cattle.

There is another department of government which does not delegate or hand over work to local councils, though it has servants in every part of the land. Postmen and post-office clerks are civil servants; that is, they are employed by the central government, and by it their salaries and pensions are paid. The initials G.R. on post offices, pillar boxes, and mail vans show that they belong to the government which rules in the name of the king; on every stamp the king's head is printed.

The departments of government or ministries, centred in London, are called administrative departments or departments of state. Their heads are chosen by the prime minister from members of parliament who belong to his party, and the most important of these ministers form the

cabinet. The departments may do all their own work, like the post office, the foreign office, the war office, the admiralty, and the air ministry; or they may delegate or hand over some of it to local councils elected in the district they serve. The local councils have a great deal of independence, but they owe their existence to parliament, and ultimately they are controlled by heads of departments who themselves hold office only so long as their party has the majority in the House of Commons. So parliament not only makes the laws but in the end can control the people who carry them out. It is supreme both in legislation and in administration. And the House of Commons is elected by the men and women of Britain, among whom the boys and girls who read this book will soon take their places.

Chapter XIV

What happens when laws are broken

A class of small children were once asked to write about the nicest people they knew. A number of them chose the policeman. They were town children, and they were accustomed to have trams stopped for them, and to be helped across the road. In the country anyone goes to a policeman if he loses his purse out of doors, or wants to say that his house will be shut up while he is away for a holiday. The policeman is the friend of everyone except of the man who is breaking the law. A boy stealing apples or

a burglar getting in at a window disappears as quickly as possible when he sees the familiar blue uniform.

A regular police force was organised by Sir Robert Peel in 1839; from his name come the nicknames "peelers" and "bobbies". In the middle ages the frank-pledge system had helped to keep order, but by the end of the fifteenth century this system had begun to die out. It became the custom for J.P.'s or town councils to call on men of the district to serve as constables. No one might refuse, but the work was hated and usually badly done. In some villages it is still the custom for the J.P.'s to name certain inhabitants as constables to help in keeping the peace as required. But since 1839 most of such work has been done by the police force.

The police force is now under the general control of the department of state called the home office. The home office delegates part of its work to the county councils. Each county has a chief constable who does a great deal of the actual work. The county is divided into police districts, each with a superintendent at its head who is in charge of a police station. The districts are divided into "beats" which are regularly patrolled. In London and some other large towns women as well as men are employed as police.

The police have the right to arrest anyone whom they think they see breaking the law. Sometimes a justice of the peace gives them an order or warrant and sends them to arrest a man; sometimes they are told to deliver a summons to him or to leave it at his house. A summons

is a form which orders someone to appear in the court on a certain day for trial, and he is legally bound to obey.

The judges or magistrates in the ordinary police courts are justices of the peace. These men still carry on the work they have done since the fourteenth century of trying men for minor offences. When the county councils in 1888 took over their work in local government or administration, the J.P.'s were left with their old powers in the courts. They are appointed for life, as they have always been, by the lord chancellor acting in the name of the king. Until the twentieth century all justices had to be land-owners and they were all men, but now anyone may be chosen. There is no pay and plenty of work, but it is an honour to be appointed. In some large towns where the courts have to meet almost every day, trained lawyers are appointed as magistrates; they receive a salary or stipend and are called stipendiary magistrates. One stipendiary magistrate counts as two justices of the peace and can hear cases by himself in a police court.

Four times a year the justices try more important cases; their meetings for this are called quarter sessions, as they have been for more than four hundred years. Quarter sessions are usually held in the capital town of a county. Perhaps seven or eight justices will be present. They sit in a row on a raised platform facing the court, with their chairman in the middle. At a table below sits their clerk, a lawyer who will advise them on legal points which ordinary men and women might not know. Near by sits the lawyer who is going to prosecute, or bring forward the

case, and, if the prisoner has asked a lawyer to defend him, he sits near too. On one side is the witness-box, which is like a pew in old-fashioned churches, and has a door; on the other side is the jury-box with seats for the jury. At the sides of the court, often in galleries, sit the men and women who have been summoned for petty jury service. The names of the twelve who are to form the jury in any special case are read out and they come down to the seats in the jury-box and take an oath that they will try the case "well and truly". In front of the justices is the dock, a small raised platform with a rail round it, where the prisoner stands. Members of the public who wish to hear the case stand or sit at the back of the court. All trials are open unless the magistrates order otherwise.

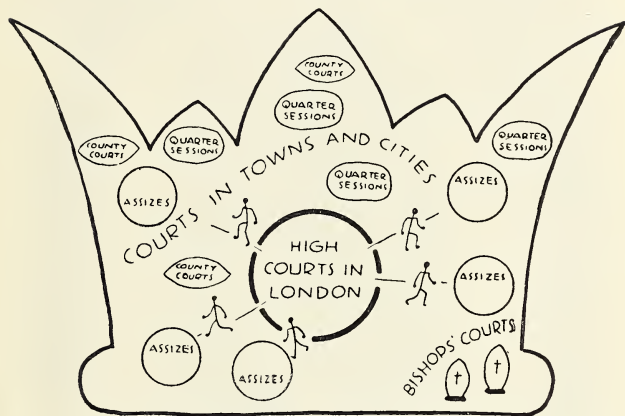
When a policeman has brought in the prisoner the clerk to the justices reads the accusation; the prisoner pleads guilty or not guilty. If he pleads guilty, the justices will say what the punishment is; if he pleads not guilty, the court will try him. The lawyer who is prosecuting explains why the prisoner is accused and then calls witnesses whom he questions. A witness is brought to the witness-box and swears to speak "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth". He or she will be questioned both by the lawyer prosecuting and the lawyer defending the prisoner, who, if they are barristers, are called counsel for the prosecution and counsel for the defence; counsel for the defence may also call witnesses and he says all he can for the prisoner. The chairman of the magistrates then sums up. The jury go out of the court

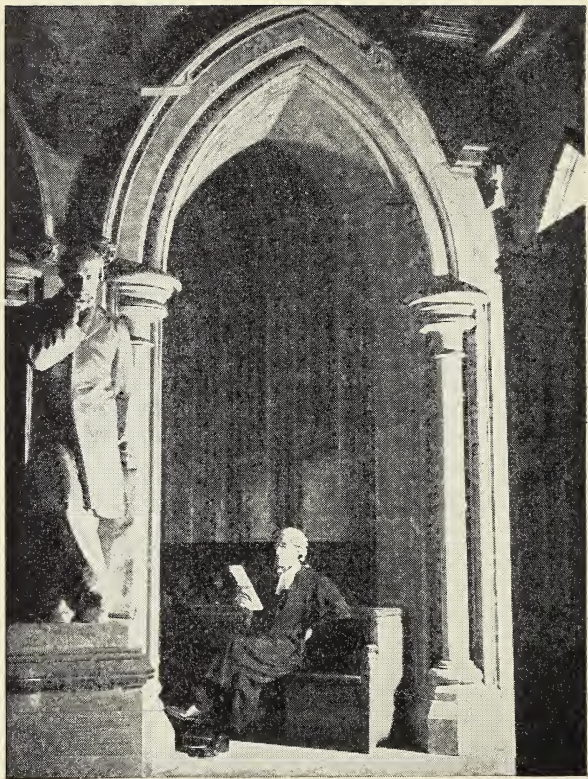
and discuss the case privately. They must all agree before they return to the court. Then the foreman is asked for the verdict. In England he must answer "Guilty" or "Not guilty"; in Scotland there is another alternative: he may answer "Not proven".

If the verdict is "Not guilty", the chairman tells the prisoner he is free. If the verdict is "Guilty", the magistrates consult together, and then the chairman announces the punishment. The maximum punishment is fixed by law for different offences, but the magistrates can give that or a lighter one as they think best. If the prisoner is young they may send him to a school which they approve, or make him pay a small fine and give him into the charge of a man or woman called a probationary officer to look after him for a time. After 1933 boys and girls under sixteen might—now, must—be tried in children's courts held in buildings separate from the police courts. Towns which hold their own quarter sessions have a special official, called the recorder, who presides in the court. He is a professional lawyer appointed by the lord chancellor, and on public occasions he takes rank next to the mayor.

Quarter sessions are held to try criminal cases. Civil cases, that is, private disputes on such matters as debt, are held in different courts called county courts before professional lawyers, who have been appointed as county court judges. These courts have nothing to do with the old shire courts which began before the time of the Conqueror. They are about a hundred years old, for they were begun in 1846. There are usually ten county court divisions in

ENGLISH COURTS TODAY





A barrister in the Law Courts, London

every county, and the judges, of whom there are fifty-five for England and Wales, travel round to the different courts. They do not hear cases involving large sums of money, but they deal with a great many matters of everyday occurrence; a small tradesman who cannot get his bills paid, or a man who has been knocked down by a cyclist, can accuse the offender in the county court.

Trials for murder and other important criminal cases and for serious civil cases can only be heard by the judges of the high court of justice. They may sit in London as they have done since the thirteenth century, or they may hear cases locally at the assizes as they have done since the time of Henry II. Their meeting-place in London used to be Westminster, but in the nineteenth century new law courts were built for them in a street called the Strand. In the country they may sit in the court-house where quarter sessions are held, and the general procedure at the assizes is like that at quarter sessions, though there is more ceremony. The judge wears a scarlet gown and a wig; the sheriff who sits at his right hand wears black velvet with lace at the front. The barristers, the lawyers who argue the case for and against the prisoner, wear wigs.

In London the high court of justice has three main divisions. They are not quite the same as the three divisions in the time of Edward I, for the high court was reorganised in 1873. One division is called the king's bench division, over which the lord chief justice of England presides; one is called the chancery division and the chief judge there is the lord chancellor; the third is the

probate, divorce, and admiralty division which has its own president. The first of these is directly descended from William I's *curia regis*; the second grew up in the fifteenth century, when, because justice broke down in the ordinary courts, men often appealed to the council or its head, the lord chancellor; the third division does much of the work which before the Reformation was done by the bishops' courts: probate, for example, is work connected with wills. The kind of case with which each division deals can be seen by anyone who looks at the law reports in *The Times* newspaper during legal term time, that is when the courts are sitting.

People who think that they have been unfairly judged in the courts may, on certain conditions, ask to be tried again by the court of appeal, which with the three divisions of the high court makes up what is called the supreme court of judicature. Above even this supreme court is the House of Lords; or, as the Prayer Book calls it, the "high court of parliament". This is the final court of appeal from all the king's courts in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Scotland has its own courts of law, which are different in many ways from the English courts, but from Scottish courts, too, appeal lies to the House of Lords. The act of 1707, which settled Scotland's relations with England, said that while the Scots might keep their own courts and own Church, the two countries should have one parliament.

Appeals from the bishops' courts do not go to parliament but to the privy council. They are heard by a certain

number of councillors called the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The reason for this is that when England ceased to obey the pope, Henry VIII was made head of the Church, and appeals which had been settled in the pope's court came instead to the king. The Judicial Committee was organised as it is now in 1833.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council also hears appeals from the colonies and, though they seldom do so, the Dominions, except Eire, may send appeals to it too. The reason is just the same. Not parliament but the king took the pope's place in matters of justice; not parliament but the king is the symbol of the unity of the Commonwealth.

Chapter XV

The liberty of Englishmen

Most girls and boys who have read this book will soon be taking part in the public life of Englishmen. They will find themselves in a world which they can only understand if they know the story of its past. Englishmen dislike change: nearly all our institutions are the result of the work of our fathers and grandfathers and of their fathers before them. Englishmen love independence: every citizen, man or woman, is expected to share in managing or in choosing those who manage the country's affairs, as we have been learning to do for a thousand years. Englishmen like order: they submit willingly to regulations which

their elected assemblies have imposed for the good of everyone. Englishmen are loyal to the king; we are not ashamed of feeling pleased when we recognise the royal car, carrying no number, as it is driven through the streets. Each of these English characteristics has been illustrated in this book and each of them will be seen by those who have read it in their own public life.

We dislike change. If a man is killed in the street by a motor-car, an inquest is held by a *coroner*. If a murder is committed, the case is tried by a *jury*, perhaps at the *assizes*. If our house has been broken into we may be summoned as witnesses in a court held by the *justices of the peace*. If a *parliament* is to be summoned, *writs* will be sent to the *sheriff* in the counties or the *mayor* in towns. In the *House of Lords*, *bishops* and *peers* will sit; to the *House of Commons* will come *representatives from the counties and towns*. Each of the words in italics is the name of an institution or an office which is more than five hundred years old.

We love independence. Each boy and girl who has read this book will have the duty after he or she is twenty-one of voting for a member of the House of Commons and for the members of the council which arranges the affairs of the district where each lives. From the party which has the majority in the House of Commons the prime minister is chosen; he is the head of the cabinet, and with the cabinet rests the responsibility of suggesting to the House of Commons the policy of the country: so the vote of the people who have read this book will help to decide what taxes shall be imposed and what business the government

shall undertake. The members of the cabinet and the other heads of the departments of state see that the laws are carried out, and the lord chancellor, who sits in the cabinet, appoints the judges. So, through their representatives in the House of Commons, the people who have read this book will help to make the laws and to control both those who see that they are carried out and the man who appoints the heads of the law courts.

The local councils make roads and build houses, they arrange for schools, for making cemeteries, for lighting, water supply, and drainage: so the vote of those who have read this book will help to decide the number of council houses which shall be built, or the question whether gas or electricity shall be used in the streets of a certain town. More than this, some of the boys and girls now in school will themselves become members of parliament and of the cabinet, and many of them will have the chance of serving on local councils. Members of parliament are paid, because their work takes so long that they cannot also earn their living in other ways, but no pay is given to members of local councils: Englishmen, who love independence, like to share in such work.

We like order. Englishmen honour their policemen and are proud that they carry no firearms. Since the days of the tithing and frank-pledge we have been accustomed to help in keeping the peace. We grumble at having to light bicycle lamps or put our clocks forward for summer-time, as we grumble at the price of tobacco or the amount of income tax, but usually we obey. Englishmen like order

and they know that everyone has had the chance of giving his vote for the people who make the laws; true, a man's own candidate may have been defeated, but the electors know that the candidates who poll the largest number of votes must win. Englishmen are aware, too, that a great many of the advantages of their lives are the result of laws and rules which parliament or local councils have made. They know, for example, that they will receive unemployment benefit if they are out of work; that they may get advice at clinics about their own or their children's health; that public gardens and recreation grounds are open for their enjoyment. So an Englishman combines respect for order with love of independence and mixes them both with loyalty to the king.

It is a mixture of power to obey, independence, and loyalty which makes up the liberty which above all other qualities Englishmen prize. For liberty in the seventeenth century they flung aside order and fought against the king. For liberty of person, that is, the right to move freely from place to place, and for liberty of purse, that is, the right to resist unlawful taxation, the Petition of Right was drawn up. For liberty of thought, that is, the right to think and to express ideas freely, Milton wrote the burning words of his essay on the freedom of the press. For liberty of conscience, that is, the right to worship God as each individual pleases, George Fox and John Bunyan endured imprisonment. For liberty of one kind or another many an Englishman in the seventeenth century went to his death.

Since the seventeenth century there have been no civil wars in England, but men have often risked their reputation and their position in order that the liberty of English citizens might be increased. There have been many struggles, and there may yet be many more. Sometimes in the past and sometimes now men oppose each other because they have different ideas of what liberty means. Charles I said that his enemies were destroying the liberty of the people; Cromwell and other parliament men said that the menace to liberty lay in the king. To-day there are disagreements just as honest and just as acute.

There are disagreements, too, as there were in the past, about the meaning of loyalty. Strafford was executed because he was loyal to the king; Pym fought against the king because, as he said, he was loyal to the laws. Men talk to-day of loyalty to friends, to party, to king and country, or to some smaller or larger group to which they belong. An American once wrote that men must so choose and serve the object of their loyalty that they are always loyal to loyalty itself. He meant that it is the business of everyone to be loyal to the best he knows. By such loyalty in public and private life, Englishmen will be free.

EPILOGUE, 1947

This book about the growth of English liberty was written between the end of the first World War in 1918 and the beginning of the second World War in 1939. The

fact that it can be republished with only slight alterations after the end of the second World War illustrates the love of continuity which is characteristic of Englishmen. But all that has happened since 1939 illustrates also the truth that Englishmen, though they hate revolution, are often ready for changes.

Between 1939 and 1945 the war forced changes on Britain. Never since the Norman Conquest had she known in her own land the horrors of serious attack; never since then, not even in the time of Napoleon, had she been so near successful invasion by an enemy; never, not even in the first World War, had she been obliged to struggle so hard for victory; never had the British Empire had to stand quite alone, as it did for a year from June 1940, against a foe who dominated Europe and threatened to dominate the seas.

During the war it was impossible for the British to carry on their ordinary customs. Children had to leave their homes to escape the bombing of cities; families spent the nights, week after week, in shelters or in the deep stations of underground railways; food and clothes were rationed and hard to get; everyday habits of work and travelling were changed. So too were the habits of the government and of public leaders. The House of Commons, the building where the representatives of the British people had met for more than a hundred years, was destroyed by enemy action. Leaders of the three great parties, Conservative, Labour, and Liberal, worked together under Mr. Winston Churchill as prime minister.

Trade unions decided that there should be no strikes. Parliament was willing that the government should have almost unlimited powers to act on its own authority for the safety of the kingdom. The British people cheerfully allowed themselves to be ordered about because they understood that unless the Nazis were defeated they would have no more freedom.

The war against Germany went on nearly six years. Then at last the air-raid sirens ceased to wail hideously into the sky, for bombing had ended. Lights went up in the streets. Soon sailors and soldiers and airmen began to be demobilised. But thousands of buildings—churches and houses, factories and shops—had been destroyed, and thousands of men and women had had experiences which they could never forget. Churches and houses, factories and shops, had to be rebuilt; demobilised men had to find work again. Some people longed to put everything back as it had been before, but most men and women knew that that was impossible, and many knew also that if it had been possible they would not have wished the old buildings or the old customs to be exactly restored. "Let us rebuild better," they said; "let us make British life happier for everyone than it has ever been."

When, at the end of the war, a new House of Commons was elected, the labour party won more seats than the conservatives or the liberals and than both conservatives and liberals counted together. The labour party were socialists: they believed that mines and transport and key industries such as those carried on by electrical companies should be

owned by the state. They wanted great changes in economic organisation and in social conditions. They thought that only in a socialist state could the mass of the people enjoy economic freedom, and that there was not a moment to waste.

The work of rebuilding British industry and ways of life was so vast and so difficult that it might well have daunted the government. But the prime minister, Mr. Attlee, and his cabinet set about the task with courage and speed. They did not shrink from limiting, at least for a time, the ancient right of Englishmen to do as they liked, nor from cutting down, in practice at any rate, the opportunities for discussion in parliament. Sacrifices of these kinds of freedom, they felt, were necessary in order that the haunting fear of poverty and sickness and unemployment which had held so many people in thrall might be banished at once and for ever. In a few years they completely altered the economic structure of Britain.

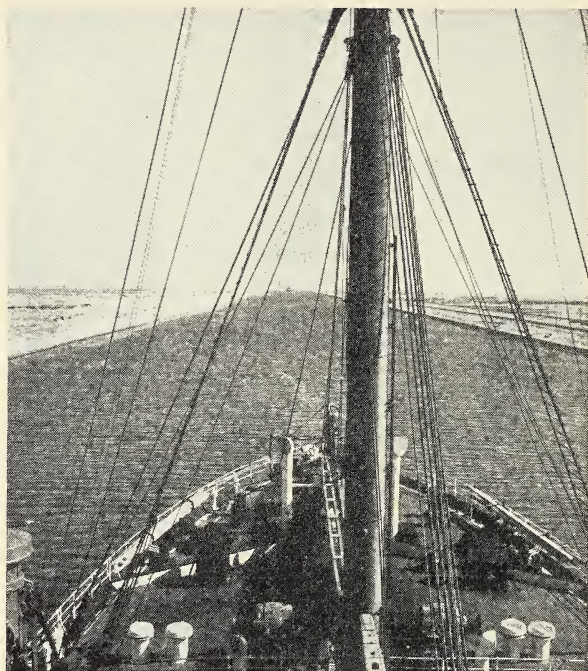
This Epilogue is being written while the changes are going on, and no one can yet say what the results will be. Whatever happens, knowledge and understanding of the past will help British men and women again to build their own forms of freedom, and to work out, as they have always done, the ways of life and of government which suit and express themselves.

Part Two

BRITISH DEMOCRACY OVERSEAS

by

L. F. HORSFALL



The Suez Canal

PART TWO

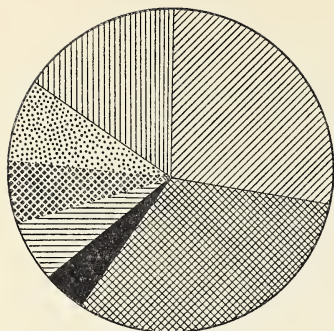
BRITISH DEMOCRACY OVERSEAS

Chapter I








What is the British Empire?

THE British Empire at the end of the second World War stretched over a quarter of the earth's surface, and had about a quarter of the world's population within its borders. The British Empire is not very old; compared with the whole history of the world it is very new indeed. A large part of it, especially in Africa, came into the Empire within the last seventy years; that is, within the lifetime of our grandfathers. Other parts, especially in the West Indies, have been within the Empire for about three hundred years. The written history of the British Isles goes a great deal further back, to the invasion of Caesar in 55 B.C. The written history of Europe goes back even further.

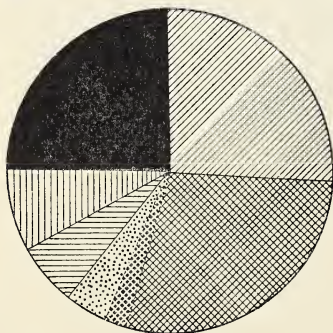
The Queen, who is the head of the British Empire, sometimes follows a custom begun by her grandfather, George V. He spoke to all his people on the wireless, especially at Christmas time. The Queen speaks in English, and many of her subjects have to wait to know what



Area of the world
1945

	BRITISH EMPIRE
	U.S.S.R.
	BRAZIL
	CHINA
	U.S.A.
	FRANCE & FRENCH EMPIRE
	REST OF THE WORLD

AREA (sq. miles)	POPULATION (millions)
14,435,000	550
8,337,000	175
3,300,000	43
2,083,000	482
3,000,000	135
3,998,000	108
16,222,000	697



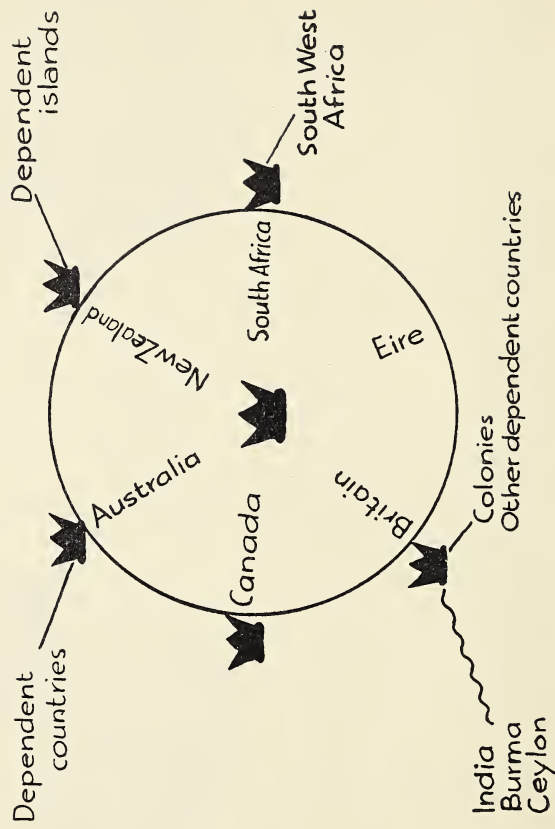
Population of the world
1945

she has said to them until it is translated into their own languages. The Queen likes to think of all her peoples as a great family, scattered all over the world, living in every kind of climate, in Arctic snow fields and in tropical forests, on inland plains thousands of miles from the sea and on the shores of islands in the great oceans of the world, in cities and on isolated farms. All these people are subjects of Elizabeth II, and they are all part of the family of the British Empire.

The British Empire as it was in 1945 could be divided into three parts, according to the kind of people who live in each part, the climate, and the type of government. The first part was the group of self-governing nations, inhabited mainly by white or European people, who live in regions of the world where the climate is comparatively cool, known as the temperate regions. The people of Britain belong to this group, so do the people of Australia.

The second part of the British Empire in 1945 consisted of countries where the people had light-brown skins, lived in warm climates, mainly in the tropics, and though not entirely self-governing, were nearly so. Most of these people had cultures and civilisations of their own, which were different from those of western Europe; that is to say that their ways of living and ideals about life were very advanced, but unlike those we are accustomed to in Britain. Most of these people, for instance, were not Christian, but they believed in other highly developed religions, such as the Muslim or the Buddhist religions. India, Burma, and Ceylon belonged to this group.

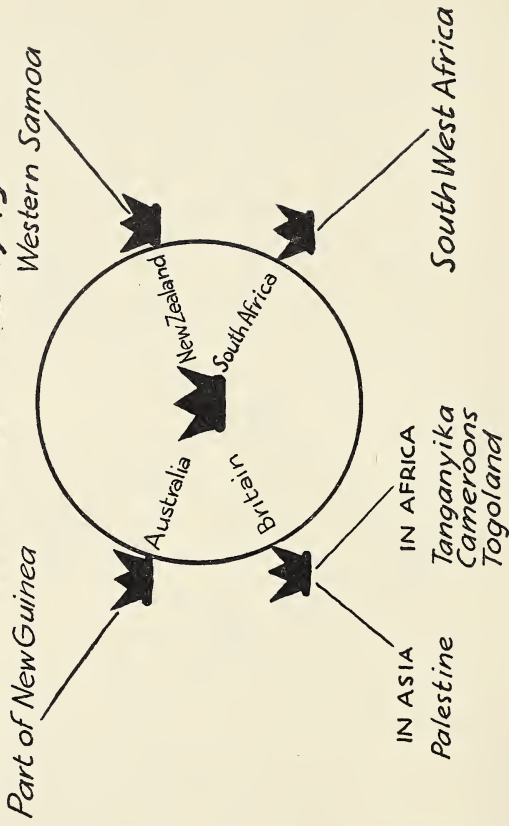
THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH & EMPIRE 1945



The third part of the British Empire consisted also of countries in the tropics, where the people had light- or dark-brown skins. But, generally speaking, they were not as highly civilised as the people in the second group, and they were not as far advanced towards self-government. Sometimes this was because the communities were very small, living on islands, such as the Seychelles, or in ports like Aden or Hong Kong. Sometimes the people were simple, and not highly civilised, so they had not yet learned to govern themselves. Many countries in Africa were like this. This third group within the British Empire is usually known as the Colonies, or the Colonial Empire, to distinguish it from India, Britain, and the other self-governing nations.

The Colonial Empire includes countries with different relationships to Britain. Some of them, like the West Indies, have been *annexed* by Britain, and are British possessions; there are others, like many of the African territories, which have been taken under British *protection* and are called British protectorates. In a few of these protectorates the native king continues to rule, but with the advice of the British. Then there are also territories under *trusteeship*, which used to be called mandated territories. These are places which were once German colonies and were captured by the British in the first World War. The people of these territories were not yet ready to govern themselves, so the League of Nations took over responsibility, and decided that Britain should govern them under mandate (or command) from the

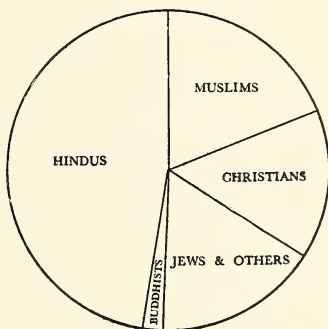
MANDATED TERRITORIES IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE 1945



League until they could become independent countries. France and other countries besides Britain were given responsibilities for mandated territories; some of the self-governing nations of the British Empire, such as Australia and South Africa, had mandates. Every year the countries with mandates had to report to the League of Nations on conditions in their territories so that the whole world should know how they were developing. After the second World War the United Nations took the place of the League of Nations, and gave Britain and other countries the right of governing these territories under what have been called trusteeship agreements.

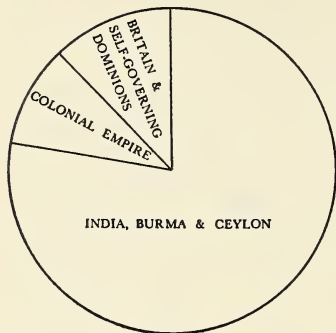
In Britain we nearly all belong to the white or European race, and we are nearly all Christian in religion. In the countries of the British Empire overseas there are also many people who are white by race and Christian by religion. Very many of these are the descendants of people who came originally from the British Isles and settled in the new lands overseas. Others are descended from French or Dutch settlers who left their homes in the same way to build new nations across the oceans of the world.

But most of the people of the British Empire are neither



Religions in the British Empire

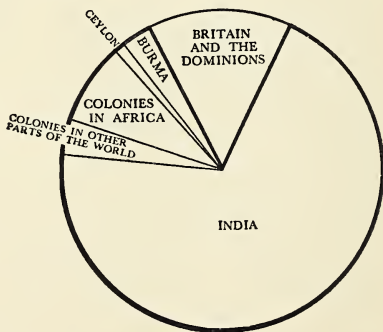
white nor Christian. In 1945 there were nearly six times as many people of brown race—Indians, Burmese, and Ceylonese—as there were white people, and nearly as many Africans as there were white people. Many of the Africans and Indians were Christian, but there were many more who were Hindu or Muslim, or belonged to some other religion. At this time the British Empire had a



Races in the British Empire

larger number of Muslims, the followers of the Prophet Mohammed, than any foreign country.

Some of the countries of the British Empire are very large in area, and some, especially the islands, are very small. Yet some of the large countries have small populations. Few of them have so many people in proportion to their size as Britain. When



The population of the British Empire

visitors come to Britain from

the countries of the British Empire overseas they very often exclaim at the big cities, the closely settled countryside, and the neat and tidy fields which seem to them very small. Canadians and Australians are especially likely to remark on England's countryside, for their countries are very large and their populations comparatively small. The following table shows the comparison:

	Area sq. miles	Population	Density per sq. mile
Britain (and Northern Ireland)	94,000	48,000,000	510
Canada	3,694,000	12,000,000	3
Australia	2,974,000	7,000,000	2
New Zealand	105,000	1,600,000	16
South Africa	473,000	10,000,000	20

The people of the British Empire are governed in a great variety of ways. But they all look up to the queen. Her Crown as a symbol of government is known to them all. The queen's titles show how widespread are the countries of the British Empire, "by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her other Realms and Territories, Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith".

At her Coronation in June 1953 Queen Elizabeth promised "to govern the Peoples of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, Pakistan and Ceylon, and of my Possessions and the other Territories to any of them belonging or appertaining, according to their respective

laws and customs". The queen does not really govern, she hands over the government to her ministers; but it can be seen from the oath that the queen has a part, if only as a symbol, in the government of every country of the British Empire.

The Coronation has always been held in London, the capital of Britain. But people from all over the world come, like the people of Britain, to pay homage to their monarch. On Coronation Day when Queen Elizabeth went to Westminster Abbey, troops of every shade of complexion marched in the procession—Africans, Indians, Ceylonese, Fijians, West Indians, Canadians, and representatives of all the other peoples of the British Empire.

There are almost as many different kinds of government within the British Empire as there are people. Some countries, such as Britain, Canada, and New Zealand, are democracies, where government is carried on with the consent and by the will of the people. In these countries it can be said that political power and responsibility belong to the people. This is a very advanced form of government, perhaps the most advanced and most successful in the world; at any rate the British people like to think so. At the other end of the scale are small countries, like British Somaliland or Swaziland in Africa, where responsibility for government is entirely in the hands of one man, the governor. Within the country he is an autocrat, like the Tudor kings and queens in England, but behind him in London is the British government which appointed him to the governorship, and behind the British govern-

ment is parliament, and the people of Britain. The British government will let him know if they think he is doing wrong, and may, if necessary, recall him and put someone else in his place. So the autocratic power of the governor is limited in a way unknown to the Tudors (pages 61-71).

Most of the countries of the British Empire are neither democracies nor autocracies where the governor is the only man with political power. They are somewhere in between. In many places some of the people elect their own representatives to make the laws, but the governor has the last word in certain matters; in some places the people's representatives are allowed to make laws only on home affairs, like health and education, but must leave defence and foreign affairs to the governor.

It is sometimes difficult to see what all these countries have in common. What can a place like Australia, which is a fully self-governing democracy, where the governor can only do as the people's government tell him, have in common with Sierra Leone, where the people, who are dark-brown Africans, have a limited share in government, and real political power is in the hands of the governor? Only history can answer this question: both places in the past have been governed by Britain, and in both places ideas of law, justice and government were brought in by people from Britain. Australia and Sierra Leone are both parts of the British Empire, and for a long time they have both been connected with Britain (Book One).

Nowadays it is not entirely correct to say that Britain is the *centre* of the British Empire, because that would mean

that she was in control of government in all its countries, and this is not so. She does not control government in any country of the Empire which is a self-governing democracy, such as Australia. But all these countries got their ideas about government from Britain, and each of them has a special relationship with Britain, unlike their relationship with any other country.

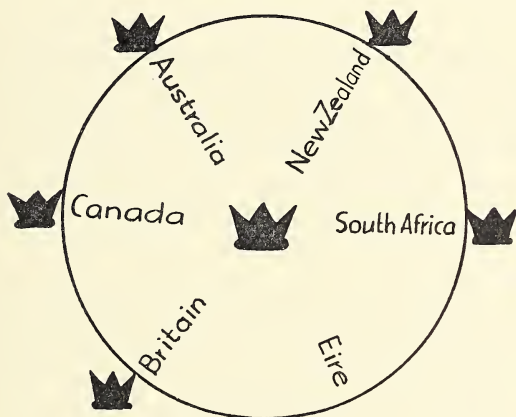
During the building of the British Empire Britain carried overseas the ideas of liberty and freedom which the British nation developed during the thousand years of British history after William the Conqueror landed in England. Most of the methods of carrying on government and of keeping law and order, which have been described in Part One of this book, will be found in the countries of the British Empire overseas, and in other countries which have ceased to be part of the British Empire. This "export of political ideas" as it is called, is probably Britain's greatest contribution to the history of the world.

Chapter II

The self-governing nations: how the United States left the British Empire, and how Canada became self-governing

At the end of the war in 1945 there were six fully self-governing and independent nations within the British Commonwealth. Named in order of their achievement of self-government they are:

THE SELF-GOVERNING NATIONS OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH 1945



The United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland

The Dominion of Canada

The Commonwealth of Australia

The Dominion of New Zealand

The Union of South Africa

Eire

The history of the growth of political liberty in the United Kingdom, or Britain as she is often called, is told in Part I. Most of the ideas of liberty which are to-day believed by all the nations in the list above came from Britain. She is called the Old Country by many people in the other Empire countries because her history goes back a long way. Britain belongs to Europe, where western civilisation began.

Eire (which is the Irish name for Ireland) is also a European country with a long history. But, as we shall see, she has only recently become an independent nation.

The other four countries, which are usually called the Dominions, are all overseas, thousands of miles from Europe, some on the other side of the world. They are young countries, and their history is very recent. A hundred and fifty years ago, when Britain was already a nation with a government founded on the liberty of the people, these countries were mainly wildernesses. Since then hundreds of thousands of people have crossed the seas from Europe, especially from Britain and Ireland, to make new homes in these new lands. During the nine-

teenth century these settlements of colonists grew; more land was made into farms and trade expanded. At first the responsibility for government remained with Britain, but gradually power and responsibility was handed over to the settlers themselves.

In order to understand how this came about, we must go back further into history to the time when England first began to expand overseas and people left Britain to settle in New England, Virginia, and the West Indies (Book One). The first settlements were made in Virginia in 1607, in Bermuda in 1609, in New England in 1620 and in the West Indies in 1629. The colonists in each case were Englishmen, and they thought that when they crossed the seas they had taken the rights and privileges of Englishmen with them. Government in the new lands should be with the consent of the people, no man should be unjustly imprisoned by the authorities, every man should have the right of being tried by his equals. So law courts were set up in the colonies modelled on the courts in Britain, and a system of government was established which was very like that of Britain. In each colony a House of Assembly was elected by the people with the power of making laws, like the House of Commons, while a governor, sent out from Britain to represent the king, carried on the work of government.

As long as the colonies were left to themselves without interference from Britain the system worked well, but these colonies were not entirely self-governing, and Britain always kept the right of interfering. The laws

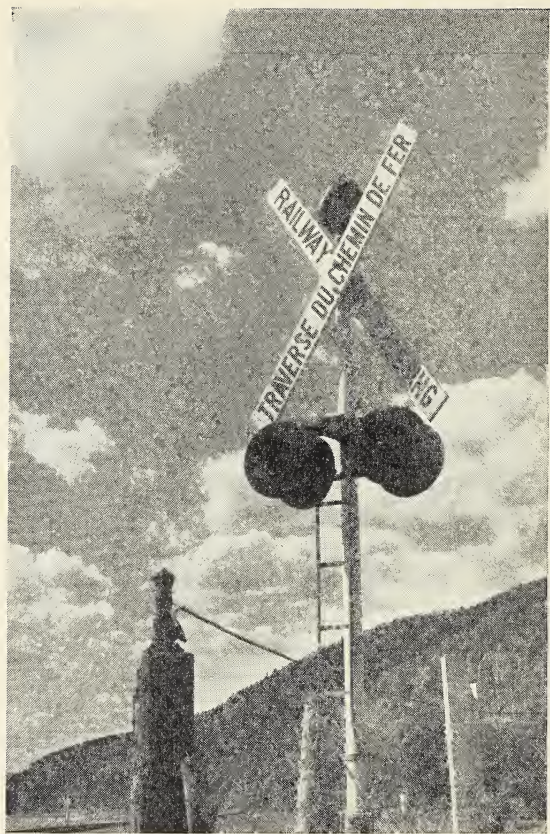
passed by the assemblies had to be approved by the British government, and quite often they were rejected. The British government also used to send instructions to the governor about administration which the colonists did not like. Finally, in the eighteenth century, the British government began to impose taxes which had to be collected in the colonies. The colonists were used to imposing their own taxes by laws passed by the assemblies, and they resented having laws about taxes for America passed in Britain. They raised the cry "no taxation without representation", meaning that elected representatives of the people ought to have the right of making the laws about taxes which have to be paid by the people. There was no way of sending representatives from the colonies to the British House of Commons, since America and the West Indies were so far away. Slowly, leading men in America came to the conclusion that the British government and parliament had no right to interfere in the affairs of the colonies. But Britain had heavy responsibilities for the defence of these colonies against the Spanish, the French, and the Indians. The army and the navy had to be paid for and it seemed only right that the colonists should provide some of the money. Besides, the British had, in the civil war between king and parliament (pages 71-95), established that parliament was the supreme authority in government. It was not very likely that they would allow a group of small colonies, thousands of miles away across the sea, to dispute their supremacy. The British people thought that as long as the colonists were part of the

British Empire they should be under the authority of parliament and the British government of the time.

At last, in 1776, the American colonists declared their independence and the War of the American Revolution broke out. With the help of France, the thirteen American colonies defeated Britain and established the United States of America, an independent nation outside the British Empire (Book One).

For many years after the loss of the American colonies it was thought that any colony with an elected assembly would in time break away from the British Empire, since there would always be conflict between the settlers and the British about who was to have the last word in controlling the government of the colony. "Colonies", it was said, "are like fruits, they cling to the mother-tree only until they are ripe."

Just about the time of the revolt of the American colonies a new British Empire was growing in North America. There were several scattered colonies which were later united to form the Dominion of Canada (Book One). The oldest colony was Nova Scotia, but the two largest were Lower Canada (which is now the province of Quebec) and Upper Canada (which is now the province of Ontario). In Lower Canada the people were mainly French, speaking the French language and believing in the Roman Catholic religion. The people of Quebec still speak French, and signs and notices in this part of Canada have to be in two languages, French and English, so that everyone can understand them. Quebec, or Lower



A modern sign in Quebec

Canada, has been part of the British Empire since 1759 when the British, under General Wolfe, captured Quebec from France. At that time these French "Canadiens", as they are called in their language, knew nothing about the English common law, or Magna Carta, or the rights of a people to govern themselves, and at first they did not want an assembly elected by themselves to make the laws. They were used to a system where the king made all the laws, without consulting the representatives of the people. When the British first began to govern Quebec they wisely tried to carry on with the system of government to which the people were accustomed.

After the American Revolution new settlements were made in Canada by people from the old American colonies, who thought it was wrong to revolt against Britain and wished to remain within the British Empire. They moved their families and furniture, and even their cattle and horses, away from the independent United States and settled in the wilderness along the upper St. Lawrence river and the Great Lakes. Their settlements were formed into a colony with a government of its own, and called Upper Canada. Because they were English or Scottish by descent they wanted an assembly of their own, so Britain gave them one which was to be elected by the people, and which was to make the laws. At the same time an assembly was given to the French in Lower Canada who at first were not very interested in this new piece of the government machine. But before long they were as proud of their assembly as any of the English-speaking colonists, because

they had discovered how useful the assembly could be in safeguarding the people's rights, in airing the people's grievances, and in making laws which the people wanted.

By the time that Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837 government in the Canadian colonies was rather like that of the American colonies before 1776. In each colony the assembly, which was elected by the people, made most of the laws, but Britain also made laws for the colony. There was a governor who was sent out from Britain to administer the government. He had an executive council of men to advise him which he chose himself from the leading people in the colony. The members of the assembly complained that the governor did not choose wisely, and that he paid too little attention to the wishes of the people. The assemblies and the governors quarrelled over who was to control the administration. Finally, in 1837, a rebellion broke out among the French in Lower Canada and among the British in Upper Canada, both of whom wanted to have more power over the governor and his administration.

The rebellion was soon suppressed, and then the British government sent out Lord Durham, a Liberal statesman who used to be called "Radical Jack". He tried to find out what was wrong in Canada, and why the colonial system of government was working so badly. After a few months he returned to England and wrote what is usually called the Durham Report.

In his report Lord Durham suggested that Britain should give the Canadian colonies full self-government,

and that they should be united together in a federation so that there was one central government for the whole of Canada. Most important of all, he saw, as no British statesman had yet seen, that no colony could be self-governing unless its own parliament, or assembly, could control its own governor and administration, just as in Britain the House of Commons controls the cabinet. The cabinet is chosen from the party with the greatest number of seats in the House of Commons. If the House disapproves of what the cabinet is doing it can force the cabinet to resign. This is called *responsible government* because the cabinet is *responsible* to the House of Commons. The members of the cabinet are also members of the House of Commons or the House of Lords.

In Britain it took over a hundred years for this system to develop after the Revolution of 1688 (pages 96-104). In Canada it took ten. After 1840 the governors chose the members of their executive councils, or cabinet ministers as they came to be called, from the majority party in the Canadian assembly. Political parties were formed in Canada who called themselves Liberals and Conservatives like the political parties in Britain, and people voted for one party or the other just as they do in Britain. Lord Elgin, who went out to Canada as governor in 1847, was the first to hand over all power and responsibility to his cabinet of ministers. After a time he even stopped attending meetings of the cabinet, so that the Canadian ministers could carry on government by themselves. Since then the governors of Canada, like the king in Britain,

have left the business of government to the cabinet of ministers responsible to the Canadian House of Commons. This has meant that Britain has no longer any right to interfere in Canada. When Canada was a colony the people who carried on the government were responsible to Britain; now that Canada is a Dominion they are responsible to the Canadian parliament and the people of Canada. After Lord Elgin's time, we can say, Canada had been given *responsible government*.

In 1867 all the Canadian colonies were united to form the Dominion of Canada (Book One). The population grew, the country in the west was developed, railways were built and trade expanded. The French and British in Canada were joined by immigrants from other parts of Europe, especially by Germans and Russians who went to settle in the western plains to grow wheat. Gradually Canada became a nation. This was the first of the Dominions overseas to become fully self-governing. Canada, unlike the United States, remained within the British Empire because the British had learned that it was possible to give responsible government to colonies of settlers without breaking up the British Empire. Colonies did not drop off like ripe fruit when they became self-governing. Nowadays, when a country becomes self-governing and yet remains within the British Empire we say that it has achieved Dominion status.

Chapter III

*The self-governing nations:
how the other Dominions became self-governing*

Once the British had decided to allow Canada to adopt responsible government they were not long in introducing it into the colonies in Australia and New Zealand. The people who went out to settle in these far-away places came from all over the British Isles, and from all kinds of trades and professions. There were farmers, shopkeepers, carpenters, builders, blacksmiths, doctors, lawyers, and a great many others. Like the people who went to the old American colonies before 1776 they took it for granted that they carried with them the rights of self-government in which Englishmen at home believed. At first many of these people were too busy clearing the woods and planting their first crops, and building their towns, to think about how they were governed. But when they found that things were going wrong, or that the governor and his administration were not doing what the settlers wanted, they began to think how much better the country would be governed by elected representatives of the people. By about 1850 the British government at home had discovered how well Canada was governing herself, without interference from Britain, so it was decided to grant responsible government to the larger Australian colonies, which were New South Wales and Victoria. Just as in Canada, political parties were formed. The governor

chose his ministers from the party who had the majority of seats in the colonial parliament. Finally, he stopped attending meetings of the cabinet, and the colonial ministers carried on the government for themselves. This system was extended gradually to all the Australian colonies. Like Canada, the Australian colonies united together in 1900 to form a federation which is called the Commonwealth of Australia (Book One).

The British took a longer time to hand over responsible government to New Zealand. Britain had to protect the settlers from the Maoris, who were living in New Zealand before the British arrived. There were often disputes about land between the settlers and the Maoris. The Maoris found it hard to understand that when the settlers had bought land from the Maori chiefs, they expected to keep it for themselves. There was no buying and selling of land under the Maori way of life, and they did not understand these new British customs. Sometimes the Maoris went to war to drive the British out of New Zealand. They were brave fighters, and attacked the British soldiers by making lightning raids, rather like the commandos of the war of 1939-1945. But they were finally defeated, and for a number of years people thought that all the Maoris would die off because they had lost heart. But after a time they picked up their spirits, and to-day the number of Maoris in New Zealand is increasing. They are still brave fighters, and struck terror into the Germans and Italians in the second World War. Nowadays they fight as soldiers of the queen, and not against their fellow subjects, the

white people of New Zealand. To-day Maori and white man live very peacefully together, working side by side and playing the same games (Book One).

When the Maori wars were over, and it was clear that the British would not have to interfere any longer to keep the peace between Maori and settler, it was time to hand over the government in New Zealand to the people themselves. At first only the settlers had a share in the government, but later the Maoris too were allowed to vote, and to sit in the New Zealand parliament. For many years there has been a Maori cabinet minister. In New Zealand the Maori and the white man have an equal share in the life of the country. In 1907 New Zealand was given the title of Dominion to show that she was completely self-governing.

After New Zealand comes South Africa. In this part of the world too, the white settlers came into conflict with the natives, and there were several wars with the Bantu tribes from Central Africa who were trying to settle in South Africa at the same time as the white men from Europe.

There were two white races in South Africa, the British and the Dutch, or Boers as they were called. The Dutch had been the first to arrive, and for many years the colony had belonged to Holland. It did not become a British colony until 1814. The Boers did not like being ruled by the British, and a great many of them left the colony on the sea coast and trekked away into the interior with their families and household goods and cattle to find new farms

on the veldt. The veldt (pronounced felt) is what the South Africans call their grass country, where there are no forests and few trees. Here in the interior the Boers founded two independent republics, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, both named after rivers (Book One). But the Boers were not left in peace. First there were wars with the Bantu, or Kaffirs as the Boers called them. Then the British settlements pushed up to their borders. After gold and diamonds were discovered British and many other peoples poured into the Transvaal in the hope of getting rich quickly. It seemed as if the Boers could never get away from the British or their government.

At last, in 1899, a bitter war broke out between the Boers and the British which was to settle whether the whole country should be within the British Empire or not. The Boers were good horsemen and fine shots, and they fought as commandos, making swift raids on the British lines. Lord Kitchener, the British general, had to bring up ten times as many British troops as there were Boers before he defeated them. By 1902 the war was at an end, and the formerly independent republics became part of the British Empire. Most of the Boers distrusted and hated the British who had defeated them, but the British showed them that joining the British Empire did not mean the loss of all political liberty. They very soon began to hand over to the South Africans, whether British or Boer, some share in their own government. The defeated republics became self-governing colonies. Then, in 1910, the Union of South Africa was formed, with a Boer, Louis Botha

(pronounced Boat-ah) as prime minister at the head of a cabinet responsible to the South African parliament.

Louis Botha had lived in the Transvaal most of his life, and he had been a member of the parliament of the Transvaal Republic before he took up arms against the British in the war of 1899. As commandant-general of the Transvaal forces he signed the treaty that ended the war. A few years afterwards he began to organise a political party in the Transvaal, for he hoped to win self-government for his people within the British system. Botha and his great friend, Jan Christian Smuts, came to respect and like the British as time went on, for the British government showed that they trusted the Dutch to govern themselves.

When the Union of South Africa was formed, the political power was handed over to the two white races in South Africa, the Dutch and the British, so that they might govern the country together. It was decided that the two languages should both be used in government, and to-day all the laws are printed in both English and Afrikaans (which is the South African form of the Dutch language). After 1910 the British gave up all rights of interfering in the government of South Africa.

Besides the British and the Dutch, there are a great number of Bantu who also live in South Africa; there are also Indians, whose ancestors came from India as workers on the sugar estates. But these people have practically no share in the government. At first it was obvious that they were not the equals of the white man in culture or education, and that the white man would have to govern the

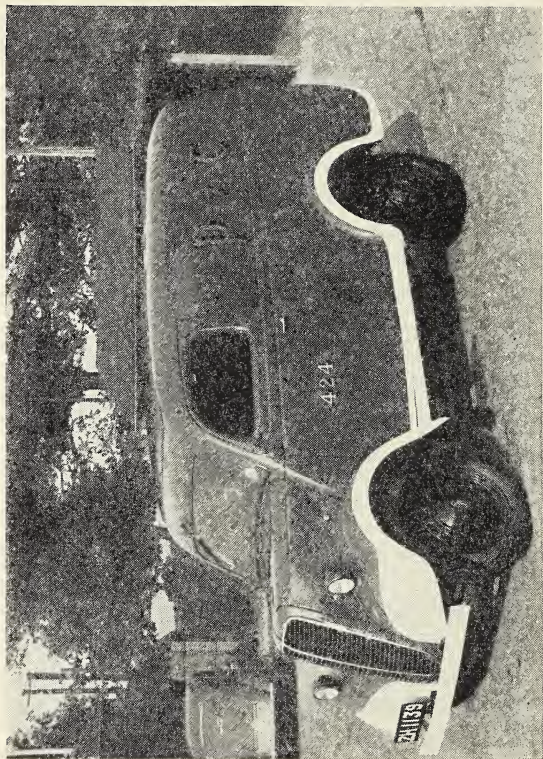
country. But as time goes on these people learn more and more about the white man's ways, and some of them are already asking for a share in the government of their own country. Since Britain gave up all rights of interfering in South Africa we in this country cannot grant them what they want even if we thought they should have it. It is the white men in South Africa who must decide how to introduce the coloured peoples into their government.

Eire was the next nation to achieve self-government. As in South Africa, this was not accomplished until after a war had been fought which convinced the British that Eire should have her independence. Since the year 1167, people from Britain had gone to Ireland to conquer and to settle. Although Ireland is so near to Britain, this movement of people was very like the migration to the far-away colonies on the other side of the world. But the form of government has sometimes been very different from that of the far-away colonies, although it has varied throughout the centuries. After 1800 Ireland and Britain formed a Union, and Ireland sent elected representatives to the House of Commons at Westminster, just as Scotland does nowadays. Many of the Irish hated this system, and felt that they should have their own government at home. They demanded what they called Home Rule for Ireland. For a long time no one in Britain would seriously consider granting Home Rule, but finally Mr. Gladstone, the great Liberal prime minister, became convinced that this was the best solution for the troubles of Ireland. Some of his supporters in the Liberal Party agreed with him, but

others refused to vote for such a proposal. During the rest of his life Mr. Gladstone tried to get the British parliament to grant Home Rule for Ireland, but he never succeeded.

Meanwhile discontent and suspicion were growing in Ireland. In April 1916, when the British Empire was fighting Germany in the first World War, there was a rebellion in Ireland, called the Easter Rising. British troops suppressed the rebellion, and many of the Irish leaders were shot for treason because they had risen against the government. In 1919, when the war was over, civil war broke out in Ireland between the people who were content with the promises of Home Rule made by the British government, and the people who wanted a great deal more independence than had been promised.

Finally, in 1921, the British made a treaty with the Irish which granted not only Home Rule but also the right to manage foreign affairs and defence as well. The treaty declared that "Ireland shall have the same constitutional status in the Community of Nations known as the British Empire as the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa". Six counties in Northern Ireland decided to remain with Britain, although they were given a parliament of their own to manage their own local affairs. That is why the title of our country in 1945 was "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland". The rest of Ireland, called first the Irish Free State, then Eire, and later the Republic of Ireland, became a nation independent of the rest of the



A post-office van in Eire
The letters stand for the Department of "Posts and Telegraphs", which is the name of the Post Office. The van is green

British Empire. Unlike most other self-governing nations Ireland does not have a king or governor-general at the head of its government; instead it has a president. But like the other nations it has a prime minister and cabinet which are responsible to the elected parliament, the Dail (pronounced Dawl). So their system of government is modelled on that of Britain, like that of all the other self-governing nations.

For a long time there was distrust and suspicion in Ireland towards Britain, but as the years go by and nothing occurs to reawaken trouble, relations between the two countries improve. The years between 1939 and 1945 were a testing time. Eire did not join in the war against Germany. This made it very difficult for the British, as they could not use the southern and western Irish ports as bases in the Battle of the Atlantic. But the British respected the independence of Eire and did not force her to enter the war.

Westward across the Atlantic is the island of Newfoundland, where the people, although very small in numbers, used to be as self-governing as if they were a Dominion. In 1933 the world-wide depression made the government bankrupt, so the Newfoundlanders asked Britain to take back responsibility for government. After that the island was governed by a commission, or committee of men responsible not to the Newfoundlanders but to Britain. After the end of the second World War the people wanted to change their government, so in 1948 they decided to become a province of Canada.

The people of the British Empire have learned a great deal since the days when the United States left the British Empire in order to become independent. They have proved that it is possible for Britain as the mother country to give up her rights over the government of her colonies, and for the colonies to become self-governing and even independent without having to leave the British Empire. But this has not been achieved without overcoming much hatred, distrust, and suspicion. There have been several rebellions and wars. In South Africa Britain won the war against the Boers and then granted them the right to self-government for which they had been fighting. In all these countries the rights of self-government were granted to people of British race, or else to people like the Boers and the Canadians who were of European descent. In Britain and in the Dominions are found most of the white people within the British Empire.

Chapter IV

How the self-governing nations of the British Empire work together

By the end of the first World War of 1914-1918 it was clear that the self-governing Dominions overseas were becoming nations capable of managing not only their own home affairs, but also their external or foreign affairs as well. When the end of the war came in 1918 these nations of the Empire all signed the Peace Treaties for themselves,

separately from Britain, to show that each on its own responsibility had taken part in the Peace Conference. As was said in Chapter I, some of the Dominions were given mandates by the League of Nations to govern former German colonies, surrendered by the Peace Treaty. Soon afterwards they began to make their own agreements and treaties with other countries. Before this time Britain had always conducted talks with foreign countries which wished to make agreements with any of the Dominions, and the treaties had always been signed by men representing the government of Britain. The first treaty made by a Dominion without the help of the British government was one between Canada and the United States in 1923 about preserving halibut fishing in the Pacific Ocean. This treaty was drawn up in Washington, and was signed by Charles Evans Hughes, a member of the U.S. government, and by Ernest Lapointe, a French Canadian member of the Canadian government. There are no signatures of anyone representing Britain. It is, however, usual for one self-governing nation which is discussing any matter with a foreign country to inform the other members of the Commonwealth of what is taking place.

It soon became necessary for these Dominions to have their own men to represent them in foreign countries and at international meetings. They all sent representatives to the League of Nations, when that existed, and now send their own representatives to the United Nations. All the self-governing countries of the Commonwealth, except

Eire, which had kept out of the war of 1939-1945, were original members of the United Nations formed in 1945.

The Dominions were slower to send their own men as ambassadors to foreign countries, for at first there was very little to discuss, and in case of need they could always call on the ambassador who represented the United Kingdom. But by the end of the second World War (1939-1945) each of the Dominions had its own ambassador or minister in most of the important countries of the world. In Moscow, for instance, there was in 1946 a representative from Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, while in Washington there was a representative from all these and from Eire as well.

Another question that arose was how these self-governing nations were to be represented in each other's capitals. Before they were self-governing the governor was the representative of Britain, and any other arrangement was unnecessary. But with self-government the governor became only the representative of the king, so Britain and the Dominions appointed special ambassadors, who were called high commissioners, to be their representatives in the capitals of the Commonwealth.

After the war of 1914-1918 it became more and more apparent that the nations of the Commonwealth were now independent and self-governing. But by law Britain still had the right of interfering in their affairs, so the nations decided at an Imperial Conference in 1926 that the law had better be altered. In 1931 the parliament of the United Kingdom passed what is called the Statute of

Westminster, in which it gave up all rights of interfering in the affairs of the Dominions in the future.

Before the war of 1914-1918 people used to speak of Britain as the mother, and the self-governing Dominions as the daughters who were growing up and asking to manage more of their own affairs without the interference of their mother. Nowadays we can speak of Britain and the Dominions as sisters (or brothers), because no one country has the right to interfere in the affairs of any other. We may call Britain the eldest, because she has the longest history, and because, with the largest population and the greatest wealth, she is the most powerful. As the eldest, Britain is the leader among the nations of the British Commonwealth. This association of states is rather like a league of nations on its own. There is nothing like it anywhere else in the world.

After the war of 1914-1918 the statesmen decided that they would like to have a new name for the British Empire. The Irish and the South Africans objected to the name British Empire because they felt it did not show that they were free and independent of Britain. So it was decided that the group of independent self-governing nations should be known as the British Commonwealth of Nations. The name "British Empire" continued to be used for all the territories, in Britain and overseas, which looked up to the king, whether self-governing or not.

The statesmen who met in conference in 1926 to discuss some of these new problems described Britain and the Dominions as "autonomous [self-governing] communities

within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations”.

In these phrases the statesmen described the sort of independence which each Dominion had achieved. In the same report they discussed also how these self-governing nations could work together for the common good, or the “Common Wealth” as we might say.

“The British Empire is not founded on negations”, they wrote. “It depends essentially, if not formally, on positive ideals. Free institutions are its life-blood. Free co-operation is its instrument. Peace, security and progress are among its objects. . . . And, though every Dominion is now, and must always remain, the sole judge of the nature and extent of its co-operation, no common cause will, in our opinion, be thereby imperilled.”

This statement is usually called the Balfour Report, after the Earl of Balfour who was chairman of the committee which discussed these problems. It might be said that the Balfour Report is as important to the people of the British Commonwealth as the Declaration of Independence is to the people of the United States. Here were written down for the first time some of the ideas and ideals on which we try to base our actions as self-governing nations and as a British Commonwealth.

The nations of the British Commonwealth have not always found it easy to come together and take common

action in the affairs of the world. Foreign countries outside the British Commonwealth have sometimes wondered if there is any unity among the British nations, and if they would, in fact, unite for a common cause. Before the war of 1939-1945 Hitler used to think that the Dominions would not go to war if Britain was fighting Germany. The people of the Dominions seemed to Hitler to be reluctant to fight in European wars; for Europe, after all, is a long way away from Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand. He thought that if these countries were not directly attacked they would not think it necessary to come to the help of Britain. But Hitler was wrong.

When war broke out between Germany and Britain the government of each of these four Dominions decided that it would go to war too. In Canada as well as in South Africa the cabinet thought that the parliament should be consulted before action was taken, so a few days after Britain had gone to war, debates were held and a vote taken in Canada and in South Africa on the question of going to war with Germany. In Canada all the members of the House of Commons voted in favour of going to war, but in South Africa the members of parliament were very divided in their opinion, and it looked for a time as if South Africa would not go to war. General Hertzog, who was prime minister, thought that it would be a mistake to join in, since South Africa was so far away from Europe, and he knew that many South Africans were not prepared to fight in Europe. But General Smuts, who was one of

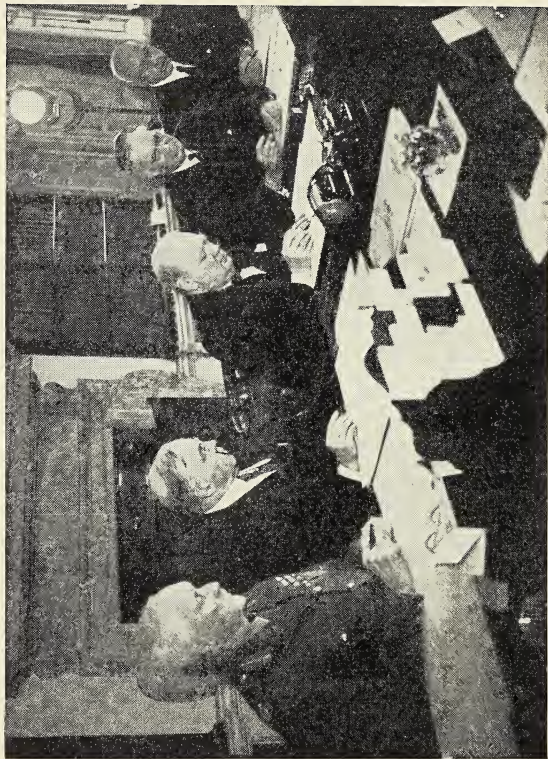
the cabinet ministers, thought otherwise. He asked the South African parliament to support him in going to war; eighty members of parliament voted for General Smuts and sixty-seven against him. With this narrow margin South Africa decided to enter the war.

When we remember that Eire never did enter the second World War we can see how difficult it is for all the nations of the British Commonwealth to act together, and have a common policy. But in spite of this, and in spite of the fact that so many of the nations are widely separated from one another, there is so much that the nations share with one another that they often have similar ideas about foreign affairs. At international conferences where most of the nations of the world meet to discuss various kinds of problems, it is often found that the nations of the British Commonwealth are agreeing among themselves, because they share the same point of view about so many things. Foreigners sometimes say that because of this unity it is unfair for the nations of the British Commonwealth to have so many votes; if they all vote alike it seems to them as if Britain, the leader, has simply managed to increase her own vote by five. But this is not true, as the foreigners can see for themselves from the number of times that the nations of the British Commonwealth vote differently from one another. At international conferences the delegates from each Dominion, like the delegates from Britain, must represent, as well as they can, the points of view and interests of their own people. Because the people of Australia are somewhat different from the people of Britain,

their delegates will sometimes vote differently from those appointed by the government of the United Kingdom.

The nations of the British Commonwealth also like to hold conferences among themselves to discuss their own particular problems. Before the second World War they used to hold what were called imperial conferences at intervals of about five years, which were attended usually by the prime ministers of all the nations of the Commonwealth. Since the year 1939 there have been fewer meetings, but the prime ministers have been able to see each other fairly frequently. In 1944 a meeting of all the Dominion prime ministers was held in London which discussed various matters which all the countries would face as a result of the ending of the war. The picture on page 188 shows them at their final meeting at 10 Downing Street. The prime minister of Eire was not present at these meetings because Eire was not in the war.

It may be asked whether other nations may join the British Commonwealth of Nations. It is not very likely that foreign nations will ask to be admitted, but in 1945 there was more than one country within the British Empire, dependent on Britain, that wished to become one of these self-governing nations, "equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs". For some years before the war of 1939 India seemed to be on the way to joining the other nations of the British Commonwealth, and her position was so important because of her size and wealth that the government of India very often signed agreements and acted as



Prime ministers, 1944

SMUTS
South Africa

MACKENZIE KING
Canada

CHURCHILL
Great Britain

CURTIN
Australia

FRASER
New Zealand

if it was not still subordinate to the government of the United Kingdom. But this was not the same thing as complete equality, and in 1947, when the British government withdrew, India and Pakistan became independent states within the British Commonwealth of Nations. Ceylon followed in 1948. Burma, however, chose both independence and separation. It remains to be seen what other countries will join the free association of states now called the Commonwealth of Nations.

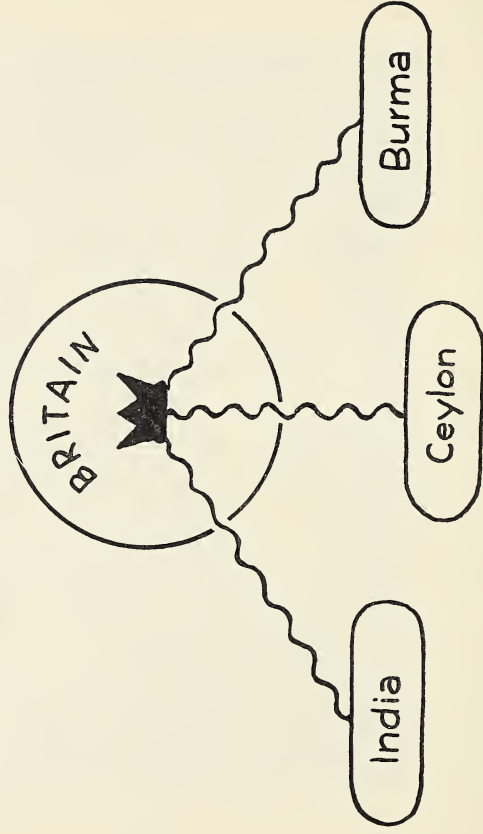
Chapter V

The British Empire in the tropics

Britain and the self-governing Dominions formed one part of the British Empire or Commonwealth in 1945. The other two parts of the British Empire were mainly in the tropics. One part consisted of India, Burma, and Ceylon, and the other was the group of territories called the colonies. There were many more people living in these countries than in the self-governing states. India had 390,000,000 people (1941), Burma had 17,000,000 people (1941), Ceylon had 6,000,000 people, and the various colonial territories about 65,000,000 people.

The tropical countries of the British Empire are different from the independent nations because the people who live there are not Europeans by race to whom European ideas of liberty and government come naturally. The people who live in these tropical lands have histories and

BRITAIN AND THE NEARLY INDEPENDENT NATIONS OF THE EAST 1945



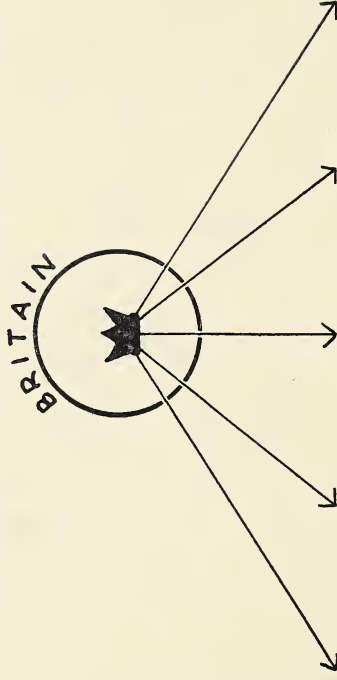
traditions which are very different from those of Europe. Few of them are Christians; instead, their religious ideas are Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, or pagan. Their ancestors were not accustomed to British or to any European system of law or government. Most of these people have darker skins than the British people, and many wear quite different types of dress. Yet, like the people of Britain, they are citizens of the British Empire.

But these people differ greatly among themselves. They can be divided roughly into the Eastern peoples, the African peoples, and the Pacific peoples.

Many of the Eastern peoples are highly civilised in their own way. When the British came to India they found what was once a great Empire, the Mogul Empire, beginning to break up. They also found Indian princes ruling over many thousands of people, great cities, highly developed arts and literature, and highly organised religions (Book One). The system of government and the system of law were not successful, so the British introduced new systems, based on British models. Somewhat the same types of civilisations were found in Ceylon, in Malaya, and in Burma. If we examine the clothes and the faces of the various people who live in these territories we see some resemblances.

On the other hand, the people living in tropical Africa had no written language before the Europeans came. Most of them were pagans, their arts were simple, most of them wore few clothes and lived in native huts. Their many systems of law and government were not written

BRITAIN AND THE COLONIAL EMPIRE - 1945



COLONIES
IN THE
PACIFIC
such as
FIJI

COLONIES
IN THE
WEST INDIES
such as
BARBADOS

COLONIES
IN
AFRICA
such as
NIGERIA

COLONIES
IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN
such as
MALTA

COLONIES
IN THE
EAST
such as
MALAYA

down, and usually extended to only a small number of persons. Travel within Africa was difficult, and in some parts impossible, so that most Africans saw little of the world outside their native villages and tribes. All this meant that most Africans were simple people, like the tribes in ancient Britain before the Romans came.

The Pacific people live mainly on small islands scattered about in the South Pacific. Their way of life before the Europeans came was more like that of the African than of the eastern peoples. They wore few clothes, had no written languages, were pagans, and were organised in small tribes or clans, living in villages. They had not discovered the uses of metal for weapons, knives, and agricultural implements, and were, therefore, living in the Stone Age. In appearance they are unlike the African.

When the British took over control, sometimes by armed force, sometimes by treaty, sometimes by settlement, they introduced to all these countries first order and peace, secondly law, and thirdly political ideas. It may seem strange that soldiers, who are men of war, brought peace to these places. What happened was that the military forces of the British proved so much stronger than the military forces of the native peoples that after a time none would dare to fight. When the country has been quiet, or "pacified" for a number of years the native peoples began to appreciate the advantages of peace, and the British did not need to keep large numbers of soldiers in their territories. Policemen now keep law and order, just as in Britain. In Britain it took hundreds of years for

the king's government to bring peace to the whole land. In most parts of the overseas Empire it was only a matter of ten or twenty years.

In some parts of the Empire the *threat* of force has been enough. In the Hadhramaut, a river valley in the Aden Protectorate in southern Arabia, the people had lived in a state of tribal wars and quarrels for hundreds of years. In 1936 Mr. Ingrams, a representative of the British government, persuaded the tribes in meetings held with their leaders that they should lay down their arms. When one village broke the pledge they had given and refused to pay the fine imposed as punishment, the R.A.F. dropped warning leaflets and then bombs, damaging houses but not killing anyone; this threat of force was enough to make the tribe pay the fine, and stop fighting, and peace was restored. One of the chiefs said to Ingrams, "You did well to bomb us. And we thank you. If we had given in before, people would have said we were cowards."

Mr. Ingrams says himself that the matters that used to take up most of his time before 1936 were

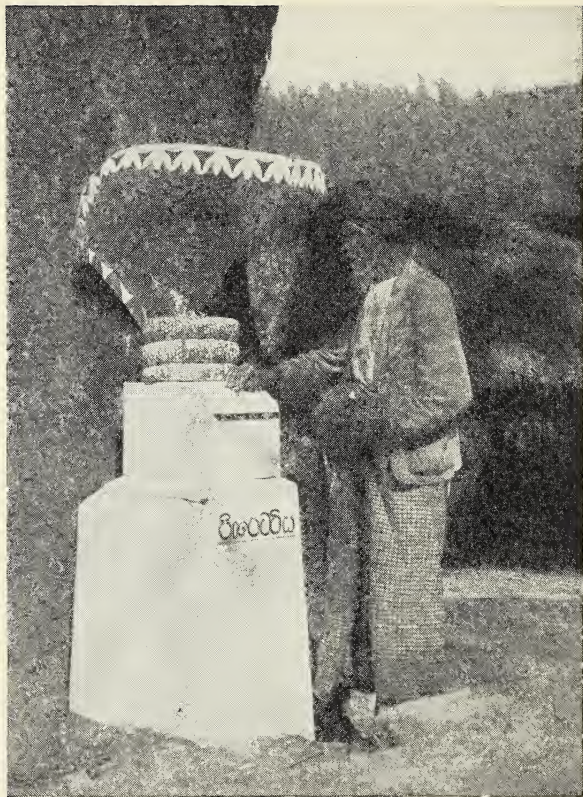
tribal quarrels, raids, murders, loots or breaches of the peace upon the main trade routes. . . . Blood feuds were widespread and even harmless travellers of the unarmed classes were at times likely to lose not only their property but their lives. . . . In places there were extensive systems of trenches to pass from the villages to the fields, and I know of people who have spent as much as twenty years without getting beyond their own doors. One man had not come out of his house for eighteen years; another (when peace came) walked a few yards to a house to see his sister whom he had not seen for twenty-one. . . . Tribal

feuds and quarrels still take up a lot of our time, but there is a great contrast between the files of today (1941) and those of four years ago. . . . Nowadays we give more attention to the construction of dams . . . the cultivation of potato and onion crops . . . the constitution of Tribal Guards . . . the establishment of a school . . . and slowly, too slowly for some of us, the patient labours of the Political Officers in the field and the Agricultural Officer begin to bear fruit.

In recent times soldiers have seldom been needed to keep law and order. But armed force has had to be used, for example, in Palestine, where fighting between Jews and Arabs sometimes got too much for the Palestine Police; on the North-West Frontier of India, where the hill tribes were always lawless; and sometimes in the towns and countryside of India when Indian mobs became uncontrolled.

As soon as military administration in a new territory gives place to civil administration, a system of law and justice can be set up. There is no uniformity of law in the overseas Empire. Some countries like Australia and New Zealand established the English system of law, modified by changes introduced to suit their own ways of living. In New Zealand, for example, it is unlawful to buy intoxicating drinks after 6 P.M., whereas in England the time varies from 10 to 11 P.M.

In India, Burma, and the colonies the systems of law inherit something from the native and something from the English traditions. In cases where the British conquered or annexed countries they usually agreed to respect the law which was customary to the people, but



A Sinhalese worshipping, in Ceylon

introduced also English law where native law was unsatisfactory, especially in criminal cases. Slowly, by passing laws, by judgments made in the courts, and by custom, a whole body of law, usually written down and called the legal code, is built up in each country of the British Empire, differing slightly from that of every other country, but all owing a great deal to the English law. Sometimes the British made great changes in the native law. For instance, the British insisted on religious toleration, so that all people in the Empire might have the right to worship as they pleased, although under some native laws this would not have been allowed. The law relating to murder sometimes varies very greatly between the English and the native systems. In the Gold Coast, for example, it was customary whenever a great chief died to kill several people to accompany him to the spirit world, and this custom was allowed by native law. But the English law calls this murder, and punishes the murderers. When a man was killed in 1943 at the funeral of a great chief, eight men in charge of the ceremonies were tried and convicted of murder in a Gold Coast court. The trial was held according to the law of the Gold Coast which is modelled on English law, and there was a jury, all of whom were Africans. Sometimes, especially in the early stages of British rule in a colony, there is great confusion between the different systems of law. But the British try as far as possible to respect the native system except where it violates fundamental human rights such as freedom of worship, and freedom from murder.

The British also introduced what is called "the rule of law", which means that every person, even if he is the governor or the king himself, is subject to the law and may not alter it to suit his own purposes. This is a great change from the days when chiefs and princes only respected tribal law, which sometimes they had made themselves and could alter as they liked. English law carries with it the idea of "the liberty of the subject", which means that every person who is a British subject has individual rights which must be respected by everyone, including the police and the governor, unless there is a reasonable suspicion that the individual has been doing wrong.

When the British took over these tropical territories they also introduced their own political ideas. Chapters II and III have told that in the Dominions systems of government were set up which were very like that of Britain; the settlers had the right of electing their own representatives to the law-making body, while the governor carried on the administration in the name of the king. In the nineteenth century it was decided that the legislature should control the administration without interference from Britain, and so self-government on the British model, which we call "Dominion status", was introduced. By the end of the war in 1945 none of the tropical countries of the British Empire were yet administered under this system of self-government, although some of them, Burma, and Ceylon, for instance, were on the way to achieving that stage.

When the British first took over control of colonies which they had conquered, inhabited by people who were not British, the lawyers decided that the king and the government of Britain had the right to introduce whatever form of government was considered suitable. The governor, they decided, could be granted the right of making the laws, with the help only of his officials, and not of a legislature chosen by the people. This type of government was introduced into all the new tropical colonies. It is called "crown colony government". It is a very autocratic type of government, rather like that of the Norman kings of England, but it is suitable for small communities, and for countries where the people are quite unused to the ideas of elections and of law-making bodies. The system of administration in India was at first somewhat similar, but its history has been very different.

As the peoples of the tropics learn more about English law and English political ideas, they begin to wish for similar political freedom for themselves. They begin to feel that a man is not "free" until he is governed by his own representatives, without interference from Britain. Some colonies, as well as India and Burma, want to be self-governing, but many of the colonies have not reached this stage yet. As soon as it is considered practicable the British introduce some measure of self-government. On the one hand, native inhabitants of the territory are appointed as civil servants to carry on the administration; on the other, representatives of the people are given places in the law-making body (usually called the legislative

council) alongside the governor's officials. Gradually more power is given to these representatives, and at a later stage some of them enter the governor's executive council and take part in administration. Full responsible government will be introduced when the governor ceases to govern, or to attend meetings of the executive council; administration will then be carried on by a cabinet as in Britain, without interference from Britain.

This system of government is essentially British. We have only to compare it with the system in the U.S.A. to see how important the British model has been in forming new constitutions in the tropical Empire. In the U.S.A. there is no such connection between the law-making body, which is the Congress, and the administration or executive body, which is the President. The British believe in forming the administration or cabinet from among the members of the law-making body, to which the cabinet is responsible, and the people of the tropical Empire have shown that they would prefer this system.

But constitution-making in the tropics has not a long history. We do not know whether these tropical peoples will continue to prefer the British model. Perhaps it will not suit their ways of living, since it was formed over the centuries in such different circumstances. But the British believe their own system to be good, so it is natural that they encourage the tropical peoples to adopt the constitution of Britain as a model.

Chapter VI

Changing India

One of the great Indians of modern times is Pandit (pronounced Pundit) Jawaharlal Nehru. For over twenty years he has been one of the political leaders of India, but from 1925 until 1946, when he became chief minister in the central government, he had never held public office or been associated with the government in India. The reason for this was that he refused to co-operate with the British who had been responsible for the government of India during the whole of his lifetime, during the lifetime of his father and grandfather, and even before that. Pandit Nehru explained that although he did not hate individual Englishmen, and was very fond of England, and many parts of English life, he had a deep hatred of what he calls British imperialism. He wished all the British to leave India, so that the Indians might govern themselves and create an India independent of British rule.

India is one of the largest countries in the world, with more people than any other single country except China. There are many races, religions, and languages among the people of India. Hindus and Muslims are the two main religious groups. There are more Hindus than Muslims, but the Hindus themselves are divided into many groups, which are called "castes". The main groups are the Brahmins (who were once the priests, administrators, and teachers), the warrior caste, the merchant

and trader caste, and the servant caste. Below and outside the caste system are people known as "the untouchables" (Book One). Pandit Nehru is himself a Hindu, and belongs to the caste called Brahmin. Centuries ago his ancestors, who lived in Kashmir, resisted the Muslim invaders who tried to convert all Indians to their religion, and so to-day the Kashmiri Brahmins, as they are called, are regarded as proud and aristocratic members of the Hindu community.

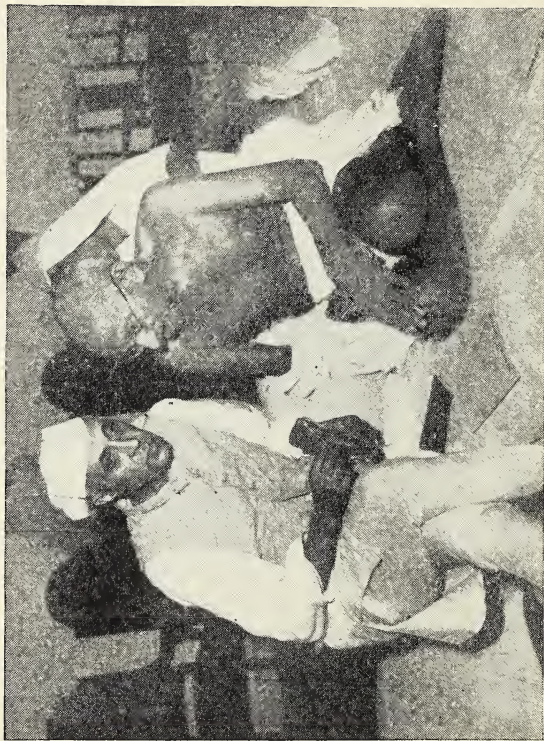
Many years ago Nehru's family left the hill country of Kashmir and settled in the flat plain of the river Ganges, the most densely populated part of India. Here, in the city of Allahabad in the United Provinces, Nehru was born and grew up, and here in 1948 he still had his home. Nehru's father, whose name was Pandit Motilal Nehru, was the first of his family to be profoundly influenced by British rule and British ways of life. He was educated in India under a system which owed a great deal to English reformers, especially the historian Macaulay, who had introduced English ideas of schooling into India in the nineteenth century. Motilal Nehru became a very successful barrister and practised law in the courts of the United Provinces according to the legal codes drawn up by the English, including Macaulay, in their efforts to improve law and justice in India. Pandit Motilal Nehru made so much money as a successful barrister that his family were able to live in a very large and comfortable house with plenty of servants and fine horses and carriages. When the time came to send his son, Jawaharlal, to school, Pandit

Motilal Nehru decided to send him to England where, he believed, he would get the best education. At that time, before the first World War, Motilal Nehru had a very great admiration for all English ways of living.

So Jawaharlal Nehru was sent to school at Harrow, and later to Cambridge University, and afterwards to the Inner Temple in London where barristers are trained. At the end of that time he was very much like any handsome young English lawyer coming from a wealthy family, except that his skin was darker than most Englishmen's. He spoke and wrote English well, he knew and loved English classical literature, he wore English clothes and ate and drank English food and drink as if he had been used to them all his life. In 1912 he returned to Allahabad to practise law as his father had done before him.

Within a few years Nehru's life and that of his whole family was completely changed. This was because of their interest in the Indian National Movement and the influence of their friend and leader Gandhi (pronounced Gand-hee). After that time both Nehru and Gandhi devoted themselves to the cause of India's political independence.

Most people, not only Indians, think that Gandhi was the greatest Indian of his day. His followers called him Mahatma, which means Great Soul. He was an ascetic who believed in denying himself most of what are commonly thought of as the pleasures of this life—rich food, a comfortable house, nice clothes, and so on. Many people called him a saint. He was a Hindu, but he had cast aside



Nehru and Gandhi

many of the Hindu customs in order to bring reforms to India. He had believed for a long time that India should be independent of Britain, and he did everything in his power to embarrass the British government in India in order to persuade the British that they must give India self-government. One of Gandhi's favourite methods was to fast as a way of showing his disapproval of various government actions. His fasting made a great impression on all the Indians, who would wait anxiously to hear news of his health, and, through the publicity given to his fasting, people all over the world took an interest in events in India. Another of Gandhi's methods was the civil disobedience movement. He used to call on his followers to demonstrate by all possible non-violent means their hatred of the British rule in India. If the police tried to break up a meeting the young men offered no resistance and did not fight or strike out for themselves. Instead, they tried to continue the meeting by sitting on the ground and refusing to leave. When this failed they submitted to arrest and imprisonment as if they were performing a glorious deed. Nehru was often sent to prison because he refused to obey the law or the government while they were controlled by Britain.

Although the British more than once during the years from 1919 to 1939 introduced reforms into the government of India which gave more power to the Indians, Gandhi and the other leaders of the Indian National Movement were never satisfied with these reforms and continued to demand complete independence.

The Nehru family threw themselves heart and soul into the National Movement. Neither Jawaharlal Nehru nor his father found much time to practise the law, so they earned very much less money. They could no longer afford the horses and carriages nor the motor-cars. They had fewer servants and the garden of their beautiful house was neglected. The family ceased to wear fine European clothes, because those were worn by the British. Instead they wore Indian clothes made of the coarse homespun cloth which Gandhi was encouraging the Indians to make so that they should not have to import cloth from Britain, and so that the villages where the cloth was made would have another way of earning a living besides farming. When the Nehru women were married they found it difficult to buy a trousseau, because they wanted to have all their clothes made of this Indian cloth which was not of a very fine quality. But Nehru's daughter, Indira, who was married in 1941, wore for her wedding dress a beautiful piece of cloth which her father had woven for her while he was in prison.

Most Indian women do not wear clothes like the British. Instead they wear what is probably the most beautiful costume in the world, the Indian *sari*. A girl is wearing a *sari* in the picture on page 207. The *sari* is a piece of cloth, from five to nine yards long, which is not cut or sewn into shape like our clothes. The Indian woman takes one end and tucks it into her waistband; the other end she winds loosely around her body and brings up over her shoulders or head. This way of dressing is very old, and *sis* may be seen in many old paintings of India.



An Indian boy and his sister

Indian men have more variety in their clothes. Some wear trousers, some a loin-cloth, called a *dhoti*, either twisted up above the knees or hanging loose from the waist. Nehru, when he gave up wearing British clothes, usually wore a long jacket which buttoned down the front, and either trousers or a loose hanging loin-cloth reaching to his ankles. He wore a "Gandhi" cap, such as was worn by many of Gandhi's friends and followers; Nehru is wearing one in the picture on page 204.

Until the end of the first World War the Indian National Movement and its political party, called the Indian Congress, had appealed most to the middle classes who lived in the towns and cities. But Gandhi and Nehru brought the peasant and the worker into the Movement. Soon after Nehru decided to devote his life to politics he spent a great deal of time in the villages of his own United Provinces, where he got to know the peasants and the countryside. He was shocked to find the conditions in which they were living. Many peasants had not enough land to grow food for their families, and they were in debt to the landowners and the moneylenders.

Kipling described an Indian village in his stories about Mowgli in the *Jungle Book*. Mowgli as a little baby had been saved from a tiger by the wolves who brought him up in the jungle. He did not go back to his own village until he was about twelve years old. The story describes the village as it looked to him. The leaders of the village were the headman, the watchman, and the priest, and these three with the other men in the village used to meet

every evening under the fig tree in the middle of the village and talk. In the daytime the boys used to take the cattle out to graze, while the men worked in the fields and the women and girls worked in the village, grinding the corn and preparing the meals. Hardly anyone in the village could read; there were no newspapers or wireless, no electricity or water-taps. The women got all their water from the village well.

Nehru's knowledge of the peasant and the worker made him interested in improving their living conditions. But he believed that independence for India must come first. He always loyally supported the National Movement and especially his friend Gandhi.

The Nehru family all took part in various political campaigns. Even Nehru's frail old mother went about addressing meetings and walking in processions in defiance of the government. On one occasion the old lady was knocked down in the street when the police were dispersing a crowd and severely bruised. But when she recovered she continued to do as much political work as she could. This was an amazing procedure in India where Hindu ladies of high caste usually lead very sheltered lives and have no interests outside their own home and family. Nehru's two sisters also did a great deal to improve the position of women and took a prominent part in the National Movement.

Many women in India still spend most of their time in the women's part of the house, which is called the zenana (Book One). They are not allowed to meet any men,

except those of their own family. When the women go outside their own houses they must go in a closed car or in some sort of cart with curtains so that no man can see them; if they walk, they wear huge cloaks which cover their faces entirely except for the eyes. This custom of cutting the women off from everyday life is called *purdah*. It was introduced by the Muslims, but the Hindus adopted it many centuries ago. The wives of poor men have never been able to carry it out strictly, either in the villages or in the towns, for they have had to work in the fields and factories. But rich people have carried it on for centuries. Gradually the custom is being broken down and women are beginning to lead a healthier and fuller life. Mr. Brailsford, a journalist who loved India, noticed on a visit there in 1946 a great difference since his visit of sixteen years before. He said:

Sixteen years ago the leading man in the Muslim political world of that day asked me to his house. As I arrived, a closely shuttered car drew up at the door. The servants thrust me hurriedly into a side-room, but I caught a fleeting glimpse of some veiled figures mounting the stairs. This time, the same man's son invited me to dinner. His wife was out of *purdah* and so were her women guests and they behaved with an ease and poise which meant that a social revolution has been accomplished in a single generation. This is now usual among the upper strata of Muslim society in the bigger towns.

Pandit Nehru and his family lived through a troubled time in Indian history. In his character one can see a blending of East and West. His western education gave him an understanding of the British way of life; in 1936

he wrote: "Personally I owe too much to England in my mental make-up ever to feel wholly alien to her. And, do what I will, I cannot get rid of the habits of mind, and the standards and ways of judging other countries as well as life generally, which I acquired at school and college in England. . . ." But Nehru was at heart an Indian and his eastern life led him to follow Gandhi and to take part in the Indian National Movement.

In 1946 Britain promised to hand over government in India to the Indians. Pandit Nehru with several other Indians came into power and took over the government of India for the first time. He was fifty-seven years old.

Chapter VII

The British in India

In order to understand why the whole Nehru family and many other Indians have devoted so much of their lives to the Indian National Movement, and also why it has taken so long for India to become self-governing, one must know something of Indian history.

The map of India shows that the country is a great peninsula in the south of the continent of Asia extending into the Indian Ocean. It is much easier to enter India from the sea than from the land, but it is only in the last few hundred years that India's invaders have come by sea. In former times the armies came by land through the few passes in the mountains which act as barriers on all



India in 1945

The eleven provinces, shaded; Indian states, white

the land frontiers. Up in the far north, nearly surrounded by the hills, is Kashmir, the original home of the Nehru family. To the west of Kashmir is the famous Khyber Pass through which most of India's invaders have come. Thousands of years before the birth of Christ travellers and armies must have crossed into India by this pass. But we know very little about them. All we know is that about 3000 B.C. there were great cities in the valley of the river Indus where people lived a highly civilised life, rather like that of Babylon or Egypt at the same period. This was at a time when the British Isles were covered with forests through which roamed primitive men. So there was probably a great civilisation in India earlier than in any other part of the British Empire.

Throughout the centuries invaders from central Asia continued to march into India over the mountain passes just as they marched into Europe in ages gone by. One of the best known was Alexander the Great of Greece (336-323 B.C.), whom we usually think of as belonging to our western history, rather than to the East (Book Two). Much later, from A.D. 700 to about A.D. 1500, came the Mohammedans, or Muslims as they are usually called in India, bringing with them the great religion from the deserts of Arabia which had been founded by Mohammed (Book Three). These invaders forced many of the people of India, who were mainly Hindus by religion, to become Muslim. This is the reason why in 1945, hundreds of years later, 91,000,000 Indians were Muslims by religion—about a quarter of the total population.

At times these invaders managed by war and conquest to bring all India into a great empire under one emperor. One of the most famous of these emperors was a Mogul called Akbar who reigned from 1556 to 1605. The Moguls were great warriors who came from central Asia. Akbar ruled for almost the same number of years as the famous English queen, Elizabeth, whose dates are from 1558 to 1603, but he ruled over a larger empire and his influence was more powerful in his day. Yet although he established an elaborate system of government and a reputation for justice, his power and all that he stood for were swept away within the next two centuries, to be replaced by a British system of law and government. Will the British methods survive, or will it be said that the British invaders who came by sea were just another group of people who overran India, and finally gave way to Indian rulers who introduced a new system? No one knows.

One difference between the Moguls and the British is that government by the Moguls depended on the personal and autocratic power of the emperor. The British tried to introduce into India ideas of political liberty and democracy whereby the Indian people should learn to choose their own rulers by election, with the right of voting against them if they prove unsatisfactory. Such an idea was never thought of under the Moguls.

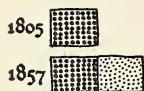
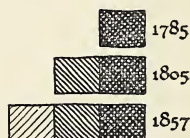
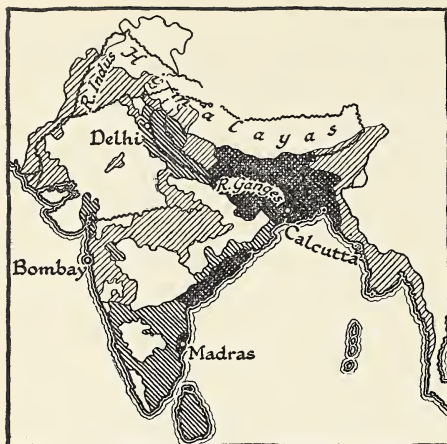
Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, can look back over a long history, in which there were military conquests with massacres, cruelties, and extortions. But at times India was ruled over by wise and powerful emperors under

whom the arts flourished, cities prospered, and a high degree of civilisation was reached. Just as we in England when we think of ourselves as a nation, think also of our history, so the Indians look to their ancient history for tales of their greatness. But in England we have a united nation. In India the Muslims remember the great empires founded by the Moguls and others when the Muslims ruled India and the Hindus were beaten and oppressed; while the Hindus remember their own great empires and the occasions when they withstood the Muslim invader. In India there is still no united national feeling.

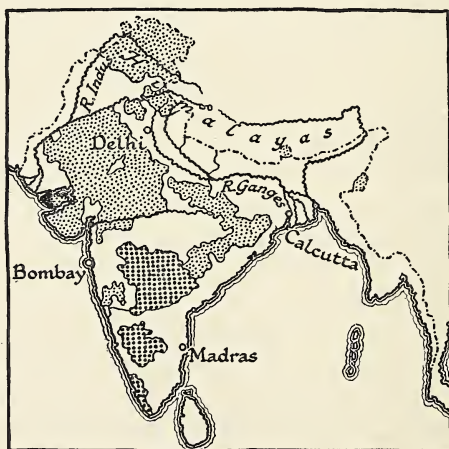
In 1498, shortly before Akbar's time, the Portuguese came to India—the first Europeans since Alexander the Great, except for traders of the Roman Empire, and single travellers like Marco Polo. The Portuguese came by sea and set up trading-posts, such as Goa, on the west coast (First Series, Book Four). Then came other European nations as traders, the Dutch in 1605, the British in 1608, and the French in 1668. At this time the Mogul Empire was breaking up and these European nations fought each other for control of India. The last struggle came between the French and the British from 1750 to 1800. After that the possessions of the other European nations remained nothing more than trading-posts, but the British possessions expanded until Britain controlled the whole of India (Book One).

The British came to India as invaders by sea. But they did not come at first with great armies prepared for battle. They came to trade. The East India Company (nick-

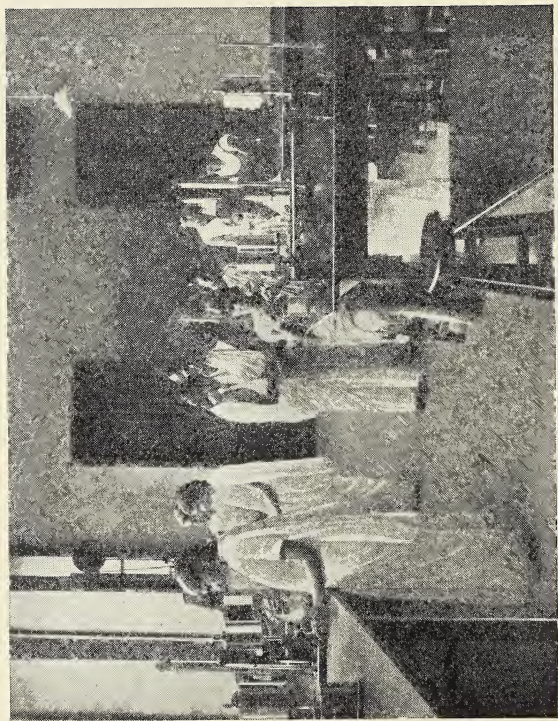
BRITISH TERRITORY IN INDIA & CEYLON



INDIAN STATES PROTECTED BY BRITAIN



named John Company) was established in 1600 at the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign to carry on trade with the East. At first they were only traders, bringing to England the muslins, silks, and carpets for which India was famous, but before long they became concerned with matters of government. While Clive was in India, from 1743 to 1767, the East India Company extended its influence, mainly as a result of his military conquests, from a few trading posts to large tracts of territory in the Carnatic and in Bengal on the east coast. By 1850 the British controlled all of the Indian peninsula (Book One). Some of the provinces were captured in war and were ceded to Britain; these became British "possessions" and have since been known as the eleven provinces of India. In other cases treaties were made with the rulers of the Indian states, as a result of wars or negotiations, by which the states were given British "protection". This meant that the rulers, or princes as they are called, continued to govern their own territory, but the British were responsible for defence, and if the British considered that the ruler was not governing wisely they might depose him. In 1945 there were several hundred Indian states. A few of the princes were very rich and powerful, ruling over millions of Indians, like the Nizam of Hyderabad or the Maharaja of Kashmir; others were less important, some owning very small tracts of land. The territories of the Indian states are scattered about India, mixed up with the provinces. The map on page 212 is marked with some states and the eleven provinces as they were in



A science class at Vellore Medical College, 1945

1945. In the states the princes were the rulers, in the provinces the British used to rule, but by the end of 1947 the Indians were governing themselves. This is one of the things they learned from the British.

For a long time after the British began to rule in India nobody attempted to teach the Indians to rule themselves, although some people were beginning to think that at some future time India would be self-governing. But in 1835 the British historian Macaulay, who was in India working on the council of the governor-general, Lord William Bentinck, made up his mind that the Indians should be taught the English language and European ways of living. He thought that Indians who learned about British political ideas and methods of government in Britain would probably want to have India governed in the same way, and that in time Britain would grant to India new constitutions under which Indians would govern themselves. The governor-general, Lord William Bentinck, agreed with Macaulay, and from his time onwards education in India was modelled to teach something about British and European ways of life, and pupils in the higher schools and universities were taught the English language. Some people think that too much about Britain and not enough about India was taught in the schools and universities, so that Indians grew up not knowing much about their own country. Every man should understand his own people if he is to live among them. But others say that the Indians had to learn a great deal about Britain and Europe, because in order to live in

the modern world they should know about electricity, and sanitation, and concrete, as well as parliamentary government and democratic elections. None of these things existed in India before the Europeans came, so the Indians could only learn them from the British. Things are different now. There are now great Indian scientists like C. V. Raman, who has won the Nobel Prize for Physics, to whom European science is perfectly familiar.

Besides science, the British brought also their ideas of government and law to India. The East India Company were never very successful at governing because they were really traders. Many Indians began to fear that British rule was eventually going to sweep away all Indian ways of living. In 1857, some years after Macaulay had left India, many of the Indian soldiers of the army mutinied against their British officers, and tried to kill all the British men, women, and children or drive them out of India (Book One). The mutiny was unexpected and many people were killed, but within a year the British had restored order with the help of troops from Britain and loyal Indian soldiers. The people in Britain were horrified to hear of the mutiny, as few of them had any idea that the Indians were discontented under British rule. It was decided that part of the trouble was caused because the British government and the East India Company shared in the control of India, so that neither one was entirely responsible for good government. By the Government of India Act of 1858 the British government took over all responsibility for governing India from the Company.

Gradually Indians began to take over the control of law and government from the British. For many years Indians took a prominent part in the law, many of them becoming judges. Indians then began to say that all the judges should be Indian and that it was wrong to bring in men from Britain for these positions. In 1945 there were about 2500 judges in India of whom about 2270 were Indian.

The same kind of thing happened with the people who carry on the business of government in the civil service. There have always been a great many Indians in the civil service, such as the office cleaners, the postmen delivering letters, and the typists. But at first there were no Indians in the higher grades who could act, for instance, as inspectors of schools, or medical officers. Then as the years went by young Indians were appointed who had been trained to fill these posts. There were still about 6000 men from Britain in the Indian civil services at the end of the second World War, more than half of them employed by the railways, which were owned by the government.

After 1890 Indians also began to take over from the British the right of making the laws. At first the Indians were *appointed* to the legislative council (which was the name for the parliament of India) by the viceroy. The viceroy, as his name shows—"roy" comes from *roi*, the French word for "king"—was the representative of the king in India and was to India what a governor is to a colony, the chief man who carries on the government. As the years went by, the Indians were given more power, and they were *elected* by their fellow citizens to represent

them. By the Government of India Act of 1935 the British parliament gave the Indians in each of the eleven provinces the right to make their own laws about education, health, the police, and similar matters. Elections were held in 1937 in each of the provinces, and cabinets were formed with a minister in charge of each department of government. In the United Provinces, which is one of the eleven provinces, Nehru's sister, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, was elected by the people of the north-east district of the city of Cawnpore, and was asked by the prime minister to become minister of health. She and all the other ministers who belonged to the Congress Party resigned when India was brought into the second World War, because they said the people of India had not been consulted; so for about six years the people in this and in six other provinces did not govern themselves.

The Indians were not given as much power in the central government which was under the viceroy at the capital, New Delhi. The central government looked after all the matters of government which affected India as a whole, like defence and foreign affairs, and the railways and the coinage. There were some Indians in the central government after 1909, but these were appointed by the viceroy, not elected by the people, so many Indians felt that they did not really represent them. British and Indian leaders for many years tried to work out a new kind of constitution for the central government of India which would make India completely independent of British rule. In 1946 it was decided that the Indians themselves should



Dominion of Pakistan
 Dominion of India
 India of the Princes

India at the end of 1947

draw up the new form of government. While a group of Indians in a constituent assembly were to discuss the new constitution, Pandit Nehru and thirteen other Indians were invited by the viceroy to carry on the government in the meantime. Besides the Congress Party, other political parties, including the Muslim League, were in this cabinet, and they found great difficulty in working together.

The problem was a most difficult one, because both British and Indians wanted India to be governed democratically so that all men might feel they had a share in government. After 1939 the Muslim League and its leader, Mr. Jinnah, believed that certain areas where Muslims lived should be cut off from the rest of India to form a new country called Pakistan (pronounced Pāk-is-tān) which would be self-governing. In 1947 this new country came into existence. The Muslims were afraid that if India were governed as a single country their rights would not be respected if the Congress Party (who are mainly Hindus) were running the country. There were so many more Hindus than Muslims that the Muslims felt they would probably never be in power unless they had Hindu support. This is not the way our system works in Britain, where both Labour and Conservatives have a chance of getting elected to run the government. Nobody knows whether India and Pakistan will take over the system of British democracy, or whether these countries will work out new ways of being governed.

What will happen in India? Nobody can tell. For over three centuries it was part of the British Empire. In

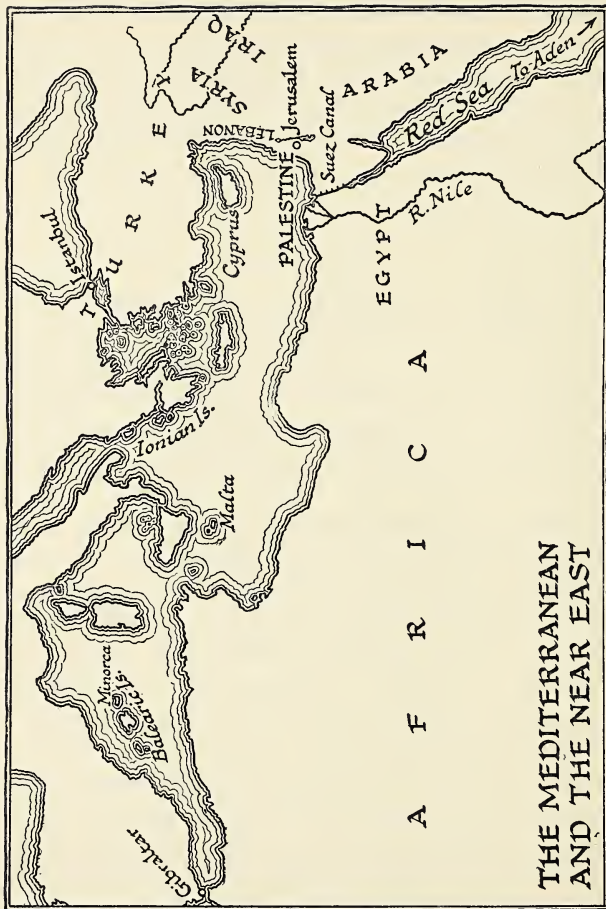
1947 India and Pakistan became two self-governing Dominions. Pakistan accepts the queen as head of the state, but India has become a republic like Ireland. Even so, some British laws and some British ideas of government will probably remain in the land where Britain once ruled.

Chapter VIII

Britain in the Mediterranean and Middle East

The shortest route for ships between Britain and India is through the Mediterranean Sea, the Suez Canal, and the Red Sea, to the Indian Ocean. That is one important reason why the British have been interested in this part of the world.

Ships sailing from Britain enter the Mediterranean through the Straits of Gibraltar which are at the western end. It is not surprising that Gibraltar should be the first place the British conquered in their expansion into this part of the world. The Rock of Gibraltar, which guards the Straits on the north, was captured from the Spaniards in 1704. From time to time since the capture Spain has tried to get the Rock back, either by conquest or by negotiation, but the British have never been willing to consider the idea because Gibraltar is so valuable to them. Ever since 1704 a garrison and naval force have been kept there to guard the sea routes into the Mediterranean and beyond.



Gibraltar was never a very satisfactory naval base for sailing ships, so in 1708 the British took Minorca in the Balearic Islands, where there was a fine harbour at Port Mahon. But Spain and France were not content to have Britain so near their coasts and sea routes; in 1782, during the American Revolutionary War, it was reconquered, and so ended British rule in the Balearics. For some time the British were without a naval base in the Mediterranean, and during the early years of the French Revolutionary Wars, which began in 1793, Nelson and the other British naval commanders used the ports of friendly allies like the king of Sicily.

In 1798 the people of Malta, which lies in the centre of the Mediterranean, revolted against the French who were occupying the island, and invited the British to come and protect them. Malta has been within the British Empire ever since. The island has been extremely useful for the British as it has a fine harbour at Valetta, and since the days of Nelson it has been the main base of the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean. During the second World War the people of Malta heroically endured a siege of sixteen months, when practically no ships could get through with supplies. To honour them King George VI awarded the island the George Cross.

The Maltese people are a dark-haired, olive-skinned people who speak a language of their own. They are seafarers, and are known as very hard workers. The Maltese learned that government is best carried on by representatives of the people, and gradually they were given rights

of governing themselves. In 1921 Malta became fully self-governing in everything that concerned the local people, but Britain remained responsible for such matters as the naval base, defence, and foreign affairs. Unfortunately this new constitution could not be made to work, so it was abolished, and the governor carried on government without the help of representatives of the people until 1939. During the war of 1939-1945 the British promised to give back to the Maltese a constitution under which they would govern themselves, and it was decided that they should be nearly as self-governing as they had been in 1921.

At the eastern end of the Mediterranean is Egypt, which has always been one of the most important countries in this part of the world. Napoleon tried to conquer Egypt in 1798 in his efforts to extend French influence into the Red Sea and Indian Ocean and the lands of this area which we now call the Middle East. At the battle of the Nile in 1798 Nelson defeated the French fleet and prevented Napoleon from carrying out his purpose. But the British did not establish themselves in Egypt until much later. In Napoleon's time they occupied the Ionian Islands, which are off the west coast of the Greek peninsula, and established a naval base there from which they could control the sea routes and keep the peace in the eastern Mediterranean. After 1815 the Royal Navy was supreme in the Mediterranean, with bases at Gibraltar, Malta, and the Ionian Islands. In 1864 the British gave up the Ionian Islands to Greece.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, political affairs in the Middle (then called Near) East were in a state of turmoil. Most of the Middle East, as well as several European countries in the Balkans, lay within the great Ottoman Empire, which was ruled over by the Ottoman Turks from their capital at Constantinople, now called Istanbul. But the rule of the emperor, who had the title of sultan, was weakening, and there were revolts in several of his territories. A clever man called Mohammed Ali was controlling Egypt, although he still claimed to recognise the sultan as his overlord. Most of the people who lived in the Middle East were Arabs, and although, like the Turks, they were Muslims by religion, they did not feel that the Turks were their friends, so they wanted to overthrow their rule. The Arabs of the Middle East had reasons for hating the Turks, for their countries were backward, the Turks oppressed them by high taxes which had to be paid to the sultan, and there was very little law and order.

The British watched the gradual weakening of the Ottoman Empire with great interest. Although they did not want to take over control of these countries themselves they were very anxious that no other powerful European state like France or Russia should do so (Book Five). As the Indian Empire grew and trade with the Middle East and the Far East developed, the British became greatly concerned to protect the trade routes that ran through the Middle East to the Indian Ocean and beyond. At this time there was no canal at Suez, and goods had to be carried by camels over the isthmus at Suez and put into

ships in the Red Sea, or taken across Palestine to the Persian Gulf. In order to protect the trade routes the British in 1839 took Aden, which shelters a good harbour at the southern end of the Red Sea.

In 1854 a French engineer named De Lesseps undertook to build a canal at Suez. He had trouble at first raising enough money, but finally a French company was formed which financed him. The canal was opened to traffic in 1869. It was one of the greatest engineering achievements of the nineteenth century, and changed the course of trade and politics in this part of the world. After it was opened, ships could go straight through to India and the Far East and save a great deal of time and money, instead of taking the long voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, or transshipping the goods at Suez. Since Britain was such an important trading and shipowning nation the canal was especially useful to her. In 1875 the British prime minister, Disraeli, bought for the British government a great many of the shares in the Suez Canal Company from the Khedive, or ruler, of Egypt, who was in debt and in great need of money. Most business companies are run by the shareholders voting on the decisions of the directors, much as the House of Commons votes on the decisions of the cabinet. So, by holding a great many of the shares in the Suez Canal Company the British government could have a say in how the company ran the canal. There are other countries particularly interested in the canal, and the board of directors has always consisted of twenty-one Frenchmen, ten British, and one Dutchman. Since 1936

there have also been two Egyptians. The French company originally obtained a concession—that is, formal permission—from the Khedive of Egypt which gave them the right of building and operating the canal, but the concession was only to last until 1968, after which the Egyptian government may renew it or not, as they like.

The Khedive who sold his Suez Canal shares in order to pay his debts continued to be very extravagant, and the country got into a very bad state. Government was unjust and taxes oppressive. In 1882 a British military force occupied Egypt and began to govern the country. With British soldiers and sailors in control of Egypt it was fairly certain that no enemy of Britain could gain control of the Suez Canal, and the sea route to the East was safeguarded. When in 1878 the British took the island of Cyprus, 260 miles to the north of Suez, their control of the seas in the eastern Mediterranean was nearly complete. In 1898 the land approaches to Suez and Egypt were strengthened when the great general, Kitchener, conquered the Sudan. The Sudan is important to Egypt because whoever controls the Sudan can control the flow of water down the Nile, on which all the farming in Egypt depends. The British have done a great deal to improve irrigation by the Nile waters in Egypt, and have built some fine dams to control the floods at certain times of the year. The Assuan dam, begun in 1898, is in some ways almost as wonderful an engineering achievement as the Suez Canal, and has made it possible for the Egyptians to grow far

more crops, such as cotton, maize, and wheat, than they could before it was constructed.

Although the Egyptians benefited from British rule they came to feel that they would prefer to govern themselves. When the British first occupied Egypt in 1882 they had promised to grant independence as soon as possible. Egypt was never formally taken into the British Empire, although in 1914 when the first World War broke out it became a British protectorate. In 1922 the ruler was made into a king, and Egypt was declared an independent country. But the British troops did not leave Egypt, and its defence continued to be the responsibility of Britain. The Egyptians resented this state of affairs very much, so in 1936 a treaty was made between Britain and Egypt which arranged for the withdrawal of all British troops, except in the area of the Suez Canal. In the case of war Britain was to be allowed to use Egypt as a base, and this is what happened three years afterwards when the second World War broke out in 1939. After the war, in 1946, the British and Egyptians sat down to make a new treaty of alliance and friendship, so that all British troops might be withdrawn from Egypt.

Other people in the Middle East have become independent in the last fifty years. During the first World War Turkey was an ally of Germany, and there was a good deal of fighting between the Turks and the British in the Middle East. The Arabs in Arabia, Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia were still within the Ottoman Empire, and some of them, especially from Arabia, co-operated with

the British against the Turks. An Englishman called T. E. Lawrence led a revolt in the Arabian desert, and together British troops under Lord Allenby and Lawrence's Arabs drove the Turks out of all this part of the Middle East. The Arabs were promised that when they had driven out the Turks the British would help them to set up independent countries where they could govern themselves. But when the war came to an end there was a good deal of bad feeling in the Middle East because Britain maintained control of Palestine and of Mesopotamia, which became known as Iraq, while France controlled Syria and the Lebanon. The League of Nations gave Britain and France mandates over these countries so that they could help the Arabs to learn how to govern themselves. Iraq became independent in 1932. Britain and Iraq are allied by a treaty of friendship, and during the second World War British troops were stationed in Iraq to prevent the Germans, Italians, and Japanese from occupying the country. Syria and the Lebanon became independent of France in 1941.

At the same time that independence was being promised to the Arabs, the British government were promising to the Jews scattered all over the world that they would be helped in their desire of setting up a Jewish national home in Palestine whence they had been driven by the Romans nearly two thousand years ago. So in 1947, both Jews and Arabs were living in Palestine side by side. Each was inclined to distrust the other, and from time to time bad feelings led to riots and bloodshed. The efforts of

the British to rule the country under mandate were resented by both sides. It was one of the most difficult countries in the world to govern, but the British tried to reconcile the two peoples so that in time they would learn to live together peacefully, and be able to govern themselves. The British finally decided that the time had come for them to leave Palestine, so in 1948 an independent Jewish state was created called Israel.

Palestine is important to the British for several reasons. The British Empire is one of the largest existing Christian Empires, and it also had, in 1945, a larger number of Muslims than any other single country; there are also many Jews. All these three great religions have their holy places in Palestine. Christ was born in Bethlehem and crucified at Jerusalem; the Jews had their great Temple at Jerusalem; and the Muslims have one of their most sacred buildings in the Mosque which is called the Dome of the Rock, built on the site of the Jewish Temple. Palestine is also very important to Britain because of her geographical position. The people who control Palestine can control the seas of the eastern Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, and the route to the East, not to mention the oil pipe-lines which have been built between the rich oil-fields of Iraq and the shores of the Mediterranean.

Ever since the motor-car, the aeroplane and the motor-ship came into use, the nations of the world have been interested in oil, or petroleum as the scientists call it. There are very few countries within the British Empire where petroleum is produced, but the British have for

many years controlled the output of oil in the lands around the Persian Gulf. There are large oil-fields in Iraq, and also in south Persia near Abadan, on the island of Bahrein, and in the Arabian peninsula bordering on the Persian Gulf. Although these countries are not within the British Empire the influence of Britain there has been very great.

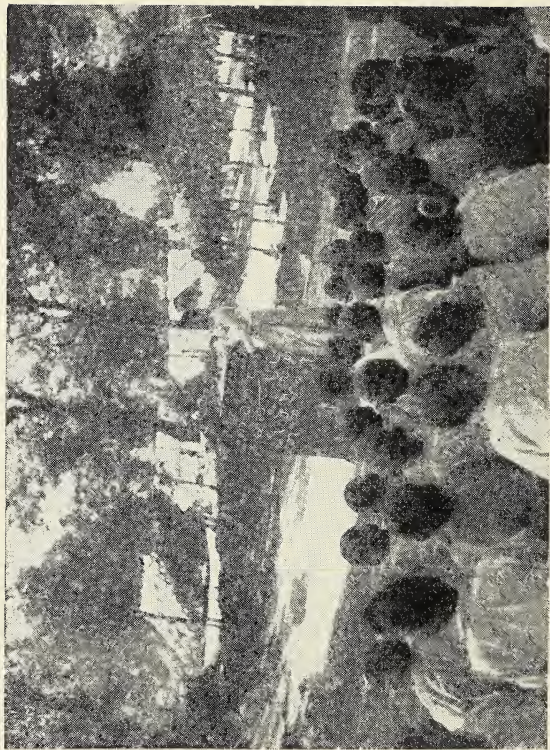
This chapter has shown that the part of the world which stretches from Gibraltar in the west to Aden and the Persian Gulf in the east is very important for the British Empire, although few of the countries actually belong to the British Empire. There are some, like Egypt and Iraq, which were once governed by the British, but are now independent; and there are others where the British have had a great influence in politics, in trade and commerce, and also in education.

Chapter IX

The British in the Far East: Burma

Burma is a country of great river valleys, set in a corner of south-east Asia between the mountains and the sea. The sea is the Bay of Bengal, on the other side of which is India. Kipling wrote a song about the sea passage to Burma:

On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China, 'crost the Bay!



A Burmese schoolmaster with his class

After crossing the Bay one has still nearly seven hundred miles to go in a river steamer up the great Irrawaddy river before one reaches Mandalay, which is the second largest city in Burma. Rangoon, which is the great port to the east of the delta of the Irrawaddy, is the largest city in Burma.

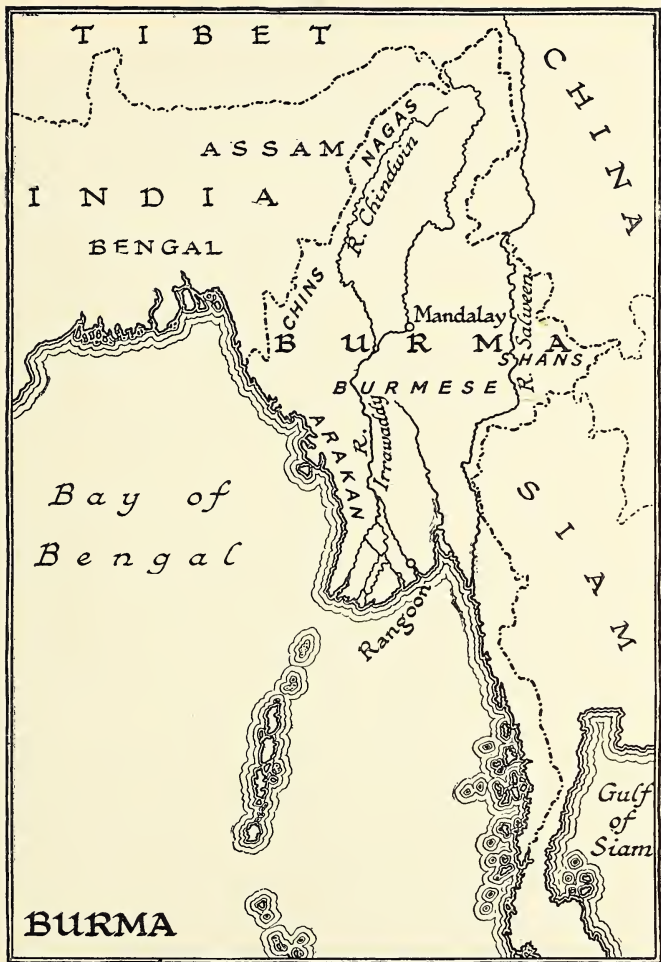
The land near the delta is cultivated in rice, which is the chief food of the people. The Burmese eat rice as we eat bread. Rice is also the principal export of Burma; with it the Burmese earn most of their wealth. Other exports are teak and other woods from Burma's famous forests, petroleum from her oil wells, and silver, lead, rubies and other precious stones from the mines in the mountains. The trade in all these commodities has developed in the last hundred years since the British first conquered Burma, especially since the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 which shortened the sea voyage to Europe. By 1947 India was Burma's chief customer.

The Burmese people are attractive. Their straight black hair, slanting eyes, and high cheek bones show that they are more closely related to the Chinese than to the Indians. In fact they like to call the Chinese their "cousins". Scientists believe that their ancestors came originally from further north in Asia, and entered Burma from the northeast, over the mountain ranges where the Burma Road now leads to China.

The Burmese are nearly all believers in Buddhism, a religion they share with the Sinhalese in Ceylon, and many of the people in China and in Japan. This is one of

the most advanced of all the religions of the East, and people who believe in it usually belong to a highly organised civilisation. The ways of living which the British found when they first came to Burma have not been greatly changed as a result of British rule. The Burmese lived in cities and used very beautiful arts and crafts, especially in their pagodas which are religious buildings. They had a written language and literature, and the sacred books of their religion were written on stone and on palm-leaf strips. Burmese children learned to read and write; the boys were taught in the monastery schools by the monks. Burmese clothes are very beautiful. The monks wear robes of yellow, which is a sacred colour for Buddhists. The men and women wear long cloths twisted round their waists which fall to the ground, and jackets or bodices. Their best clothes are silk, of very beautiful colours. Both men and women like smoking small cigars. The women are given a much higher place in society than is usual in the East; they go about by themselves and manage their own lives much like the women of Britain. To-day there are over 12,000,000 Burmese.

Besides the Burmese there are about 4,000,000 other people in Burma who live mainly in the surrounding hills. Some are primitive peoples, like the Nagas who wear few clothes and are head-hunters. Others are more civilised, like the Shans who live in the Shan States in the eastern mountains, and are closely related to their neighbours the Siamese. The Burmese of the plains have often been at war with the people of the hills, and the British found,



when they first took over control, that they would have to govern the hill tribes separately from the rest of Burma.

Burma's ancient civilisation had one great weakness—its system of government under the Burmese king, which, because of the lack of a law about the succession, could not be handed on smoothly from father to son. When a Burmese king died there was no certainty about who would succeed him, and the country was thrown into disorder. The weak system of government is one reason why the British found it possible to establish control over Burma.

Burma is one of the countries which the British conquered by force of arms, mainly within the last hundred years. There were three short Anglo-Burmese wars; by 1890 the country was pacified.

The British had conducted these wars from India and had used a large number of Indian troops, so when they conquered Burma they made it part of the Indian Empire and administered it as a province of India. Until 1921 Burma was governed by a governor who was responsible to the viceroy of India at New Delhi, who in turn was responsible to the secretary of state for India in London. In the winter the governor lived in Rangoon, and in the summer at Maymyo in the hills near Mandalay where the climate was cooler. Government was carried on in the name of the governor by members of the Indian civil service who came out from Britain to spend their lives in the service of the government of Burma. The lower grades in the civil service, the clerks, police constables, and so on, were at first mainly Indians, or later Burmese.

For a long time the Burmese took very little interest in government, either in making laws or in administration. But they were interested in education and especially in the new western type of education which American and British missionaries and, later, the British government introduced into Burma. The young men and women learned how the British and Americans had come to govern themselves, and words like "nationalism", "independence", and "democracy" came to have some meaning for them. When, in 1919, the British government announced that they would give the people of India a share in the government of their own country, the Burmese began to protest that they, too, should be granted a measure of self-government. They were very anxious that Burma should not be treated as if it were more backward than, or inferior to, India. The Burmese have never liked the Indians, and their dislike increased because so many of them owed money to Indian money-lenders, or *chettys* as they were called, who settled in Burma after the British took over the country. Some people feared that the Indian *chettys* would one day control all the economic life of the country because so many Burmese would owe them money.

In 1921, in answer to the Burmese protests, the British granted them the same kind of government as had been granted to the provinces of India. Under the Government of India Act, passed by the British parliament in 1921, certain subjects of government, for instance education, public health, and forestry, ceased to be the responsibility

of the governor and became the responsibility of two Burmese ministers who were appointed by the governor from the legislative council, and who could be put out of office by the legislative council if it disapproved of their actions. This was responsible government in certain subjects only, and did not give the Burmese real self-government. After 1921, 80 out of the 103 members of the legislative council were elected by the people of Burma instead of being appointed by the governor.

The next great change in government came in 1937. The Burmese people were now convinced that they wanted to govern themselves, and that they wished to be separated from India. So the British parliament passed a Government of Burma Act which separated India and Burma. The Act did not give the Burmese complete independence, but it gave them a very much larger degree of self-government and brought them even nearer than India to the status of a Dominion. Between 1937 and 1941, when the Japanese invaded the country and swept away this system of government, a cabinet of Burmese ministers headed by a prime minister was in control of the government. There were some subjects in which the ministers could not interfere which were reserved for the governor. These "reserved" subjects were mainly defence, foreign affairs, and administration of the hill districts. In most other affairs the ministers and parliament of Burma governed in a way similar to that of the cabinet and parliament of Britain. The ministers were responsible to the parliament and so to the people of Burma; the

governor remained responsible for his share in government to the secretary of state for Burma in London and so to parliament and the people of Britain.

In December 1941 war broke out between Japan and the British Empire. In 1942 the Japanese invaded southern Burma, and by a series of rapid advances forced the British to withdraw from the whole of Burma. Then in 1944 the Japanese tried to invade India over the Assam frontier, but they were beaten back by the British armies. The British also organised guerrilla warfare within Burma behind the Japanese lines, dropping men and supplies from the air where necessary. In 1944 the British 14th Army, composed of British, Indians, and Africans, began to advance into Burma again. They came overland from Assam into upper Burma, and from Bengal by sea and land into Arakan; in the north they had the help of Chinese and American troops. By March 1945 they had driven the Japanese out of Mandalay, the ancient capital; and by May Rangoon had been captured and the Japanese army in Burma destroyed. In October the governor was again in Rangoon, and British rule in Burma was restored.

Some of the Burmese were glad to see the Japanese when they first entered the country in 1942, for they believed that Japan had come to give Burma her independence. It is true that at first the Japanese did set up a Burma government under the Burmese leader Dr. Ba Maw, who had once been prime minister under the British. But before long it was clear that the Japanese were allow-

ing far less political and individual freedom than the Burmese had been accustomed to under the British. The people suffered as a result of the war; the Japanese imported very few goods, and so there were no new clothes, household necessities, or tools for the Burmese to buy. Wherever fighting or bombing had occurred there was devastation. The Burmese were glad to see the last of the Japanese. A Burma independence army had been formed to fight, in the first place, against the British, under the command of a young man called Aung San. But they decided they hated the Japanese more than the British, so they began to help the 14th Army. When the governor came back to Rangoon in October 1945 he called on several of the political leaders among the Burmese to help him to administer the government as members of his executive council. At first Aung San and his political party, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, refused because they distrusted the British. But in September 1946 they changed their policy, and Aung San became the chief member of the Governor's Council.

Meanwhile the British decided to grant Burma complete self-government as soon as the state of the country made it possible. The Burmese were to draw up a new constitution for themselves, and decide whether they wished to remain within the British Commonwealth, or whether they wished to become an independent foreign nation like the countries of the Middle East. In 1948 Burma became an independent republic outside the British Commonwealth.

Chapter X

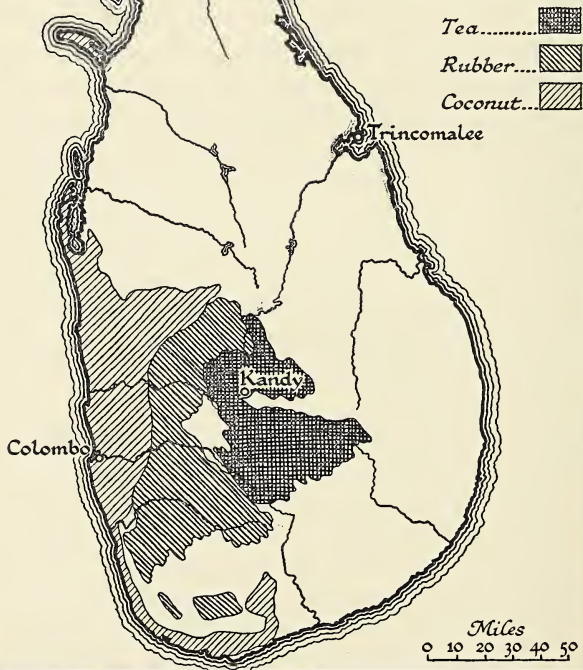
*The British in the Far East:
Ceylon, Malaya, Borneo, and Hong Kong*

In their expansion to the East the British had taken over control of two other countries with ancient oriental civilisations—Ceylon and Malaya. In each case it was the British traders, and particularly the East India Company, which first took an interest. But besides trade, defence and control of the sea routes to India and to China were reasons for taking over these countries. Their importance has increased since those early days. Ceylon now supplies large quantities of tea, rubber, and coconut oil. Malaya is the world's largest producer of rubber and tin (Book One).

The peninsula of Malaya is in an excellent position for controlling all the sea routes which lead from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific. When the Japanese captured Malaya from the British in 1942 the Royal Navy had to withdraw to Ceylon, and, for a few months, had to shift its main base right across the Indian Ocean to Kilindini in Kenya. This left Burma, India, and Australia open to Japanese attack. The British regained possession of Malaya after the Japanese were defeated in 1945.

The importance of Ceylon is shown by the fact that, after Burma, Ceylon was the next place attacked by the Japanese within the Indian Ocean. In April 1942 Japanese aeroplanes raided Ceylon, but they were beaten off,

Map of CEYLON
showing
Tea, Rubber and Coconut
Production, 1939



and no further raids were made. From their base at Trincomalee on the north-east coast of Ceylon, the Royal Navy carried on the sea war against the Japanese in the Indian Ocean. Britain made use of Ceylon in much the same way in earlier days, although the enemy was not the Japanese.

Other European nations were ahead of the British in both Ceylon and Malaya. First came the Portuguese, then came the Dutch. Both have left remnants of their national cultures behind them. In Ceylon to-day, for example, the law is founded on the old Roman-Dutch law introduced by Holland.

Ceylon

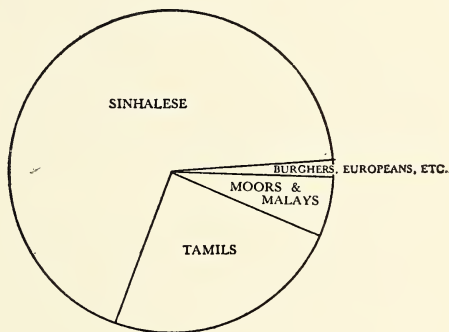
The British captured Ceylon from the Dutch in 1796 during the wars with Napoleon. In 1802 the British began to govern Ceylon as a crown colony. The man who was governor from 1805 to 1811, General Sir Thomas Maitland—a descendant of his uncle writes history books in this series—created a separate civil service for Ceylon and a system of courts of law. The lower branches of the civil service have always been Ceylonese; at first the upper branches were recruited from Britain, but, especially in the present century, more and more Ceylonese have entered the service of their country.

All the people who think of Ceylon as their home are called Ceylonese. But they are of many different races and religions. There are the Sinhalese, who formerly ruled the island, and who are Buddhists. There is a picture of a

Sinhalese on page 196. Then there are the Tamils, who came originally from southern India and now live in the north of Ceylon, or on the tea and rubber estates as labourers; the Tamils are mainly Hindus in religion. The next biggest group in the population are Muslim in religion. Some of them are Malays from Malaya, but most of them are Arabs, known in Ceylon as Moors. A great many of the Moors live in the towns and on the coasts, but some are settled inland. Next come the Burghers who are descended from the Dutch who first came to the island. Lastly come the British and other Europeans, who manage the tea and rubber estates, and the shipping at the great port of Colombo.

Ceylon is known as a "plural community" because, like India, it has so many different racial and religious groups in its population. The Sinhalese, who number more than half the total, are known as "the majority group", the others are called "minority groups", or simply "minorities". The chief problem of government in Ceylon is how to make sure that all these different groups will live peacefully together. The same problem exists in India, but there feelings are very bitter. In Ceylon the races get along very well together, and racial feelings are not aroused until politics are discussed. As long as Britain ruled Ceylon as a crown colony through the autocratic power of the governor these racial feelings did not matter very much. The governor was careful to choose his advisers in his executive council from among the different groups in the population, so that he could find out the

varying points of view, and act in a way which would not oppress the minorities. As Ceylon became more self-governing the place of the minorities in political life became more of a problem. When elections are held, the Sinhalese usually vote for a Sinhalese, the Tamils for a Tamil, and so on. Since there are so many Sinhalese they



Inhabitants of Ceylon

will always form a majority in the legislature, and as long as political parties in Ceylon are organised on racial lines the minorities will have no hope of winning an election and governing the country. There was the same problem in India.

For over a hundred years after their conquest, the British governed Ceylon as a crown colony. They did very little towards increasing the Ceylonese share in responsibility for government, but the Ceylonese seemed content.

Then, shortly before the war of 1914-1918, those Ceylonese who had been educated in western ideas began to demand self-government. In 1910 the people of Ceylon began to *elect* their representatives on the legislative council instead of having them *appointed* by the governor. This was about the time when the same change was taking place in India. After the war many more elected representatives were added to the legislative council. The elected members could now outvote the men appointed by the governor, and the situation became rather like that in the Canadian colonies before the rebellions of 1837. Neither the legislative council nor the governor and his executive council could control each other, and it was sometimes difficult to carry on government.

In 1931 a new constitution was introduced. Ceylon was granted universal suffrage so that both men and women over twenty-one had the vote—for the first time in a tropical country within the British Empire. Another change was that the members of the legislature were given a share in responsibility for administration.

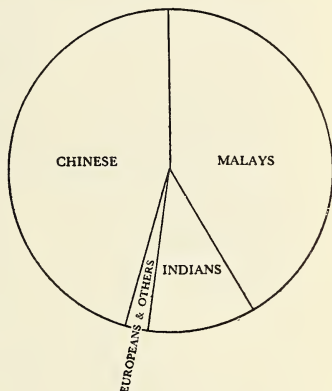
But the Ceylonese were not satisfied because they wanted to control more of the functions of government. In 1946 they received a new constitution which gave them greater powers of self-government. It provided for a cabinet of ministers who govern as in Britain with full responsibility for internal affairs only. Then in 1948 Ceylon became a self-governing Dominion of the British Commonwealth, with the cabinet controlling defence and foreign affairs as well.

Malaya

The recent history of Malaya has been very different. As in India, the British first established themselves in trading-posts along the coasts, and gradually extended their control over the interior. There was, however, little fighting or bloodshed, and British power was extended by agreements made with the sultans who ruled over the Malay States.

In 1786 the first trading-post was established when Francis Light of the East India Company took the island of Penang, off the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, for the British.

In 1819 Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles made a settlement on the almost uninhabited island of Singapore, and later signed agreements with the sultan of Johore which made the whole island a British possession. In 1824 the British took over control of Malacca, another trading post, from the Dutch. These trading-posts, especially Singapore, rapidly grew into thriving ports through which passed the commerce not only of the Malay Peninsula, but also of the whole East Indian archipelago. For

*Inhabitants of Malaya*



A Malay sultan

many years the British did not extend their control further. In the 1870's, however, they began to make treaties with the sultans of the mainland, which brought the Malay States under British protection. This meant that while each sultan continued to rule in his own state he governed with the help of a British adviser, and all questions of external affairs and defence were the responsibility of Britain. The Malay States were rather like the Indian states ruled over by the Indian princes.

The first reason why the British took over the protection of the Malay States between 1874 and 1909 was because of the piracy, civil war, and lawlessness in the peninsula. But by 1900 there was another reason: the peninsula itself was beginning to be important. British firms were sharing in the running of the tin mines, which for centuries had been managed only by Chinese from southern China. British firms were also developing the rubber plantations in the Malay States. The demand for rubber tyres expanded rapidly when the motor-car came into common use after 1910.

Under British protection the peninsula settled down to a peaceful existence. Roads and railways were built, the sales of tin, rubber, and other tropical products led to great prosperity, and the government services expanded, bringing health and education to all the inhabitants. In 1939 the standards of living for all were probably higher than in any other tropical country in the world.

Many races have lived in Malaya, and shared in this prosperity. Malaya, like Ceylon, is a "plural community".

To-day the most numerous are the Chinese, but they form less than half the population, and are, therefore, not in a majority. The Chinese live in the ports and in the tin-mining areas. They came mainly from southern China, some as many as three hundred years ago, others very recently for a temporary stay as labourers. The Malays, who have been there longest, are related to the people in neighbouring countries such as Siam, Burma, and Java. They are all Muslims. There are also Indians, mainly Tamils from southern India, who have come to Malaya to work as labourers on the rubber plantations. Many come only for a short time and then return to India, but about one-third look on Malaya as their home. The Tamils are Hindus. As in Ceylon, there are other small communities, of British and other Europeans, of Arabs, and of Eurasians, who, as the name suggests are of mixed European and Asiatic descent. The main problems of government in Malaya are concerned with the conflicting interests of all these different peoples. As in Ceylon, all the races live together peaceably enough as a rule, and it is only in politics that racial divisions are important.

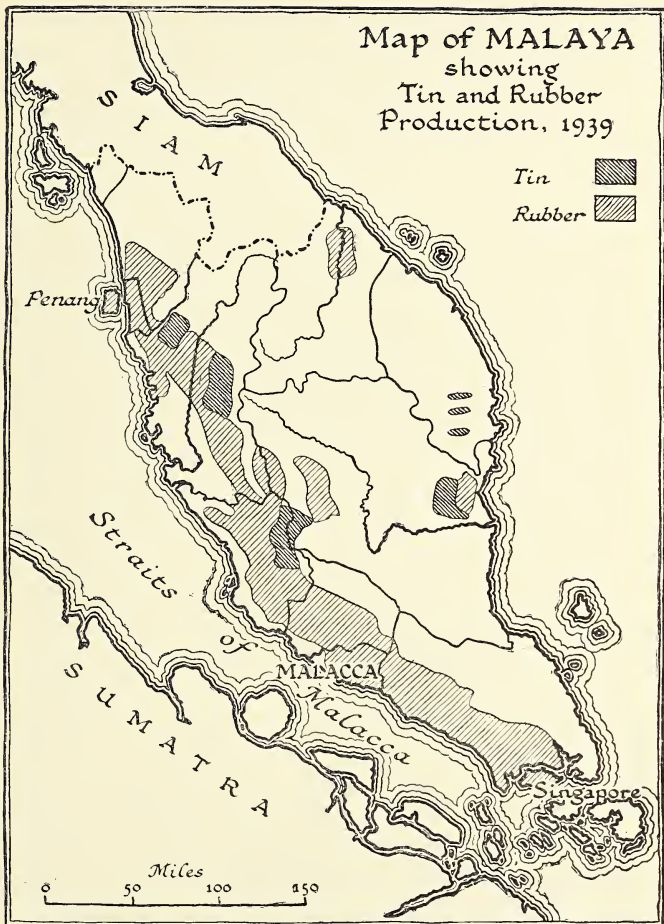
After the British regained control of Malaya at the end of the war in 1945 they announced that they would set up a new system of government to include all the peninsula except Singapore in a Federation of Malaya. All the races are to have equal political rights, and all who have their real homes in the peninsula are to be citizens of Malaya. At first the Federation will be governed much like a crown colony. The high commissioner, as the governor is

Map of MALAYA
showing
Tin and Rubber
Production, 1939

Tin



Rubber



Miles
0 50 100 150

called, will control administration, although he will be assisted by an executive council and a legislative council. But it is hoped that gradually, as prosperity and peace return, Malaya will become a fully self-governing nation within the Commonwealth.

Borneo

On the northern coast of the island of Borneo are three British colonies—Sarawak, Brunei, and British North Borneo. Sarawak (pronounced Saraa-wah) was granted to James Brooke, an Englishman, by the Sultan of Brunei in 1841. He and his descendants ruled there as white rajahs for over a hundred years until the British government took over, and governed Sarawak as a crown colony. British North Borneo was ruled by a trading company from 1881 until it, too, became a crown colony in 1946. The wealth of the British territories in Borneo has not yet been fully developed, but there are rich oil-fields and tropical forests. Along the banks of the rivers live the Sea Dyaks, a simple people, who are expert boatmen and fishermen. Inland are other tribes who were once head-hunters, and who made fine guerrilla fighters in the war against the Japanese from 1941 to 1945.

Hong Kong

The end of the British road to the Far East is the island of Hong Kong, which is off the coast of China and more than a thousand miles from Singapore. When the British took Hong Kong, in a war with China in 1841, the island

was practically uninhabited. Now it is a great city with over two million inhabitants. Most of the people are Chinese—merchants, bankers, shopkeepers, and labourers. From Hong Kong trade has been carried on with the whole of southern China. The British established a university at Hong Kong, where many Chinese have studied western ways of living. The great Chinese national leader, Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who was the first president of the Republic of China in 1912, had once been a student in Hong Kong. For many years the British have governed Hong Kong as a crown colony. Chinese have been members of the civil service, and have been appointed by the governor to the legislative council, so that they have had some share in the government of the island. When the British recovered Hong Kong from the Japanese after the war in 1945 they promised to give the inhabitants a larger share in their own government.

Chapter XI

How a colony is governed

When the British took over control of a new territory they at once established a system of government. At first it was usually a military government, and the general or commander who had first conquered or occupied the place became the chief authority. But sooner or later a civil government was set up, a governor was appointed by Britain, and the business of administration began.

Hundreds of years ago administration was simpler than it is to-day. The government was not expected to concern itself with many matters, and there was no department of agriculture, of education, or health. To-day in nearly every territory of the British Empire these important departments of government exist.

Every territory has a completely separate system of government of its own. We speak of the government of Nigeria or the government of Trinidad just as we speak of the government of Canada or the government of Britain. Laws for each colony are usually passed in the colony, and administration is carried on from the capital city. Government of the colonies is *not* carried on in Britain, although Britain remains responsible for everything the colonial government may do. This responsibility is exercised through the colonial governor who controls the government of his colony under the crown colony system (page 199).

When the governor leaves Britain to take up his appointment in the colony he carries with him three documents which show that the British government have given him the responsibility of carrying on government in the king's name. One of these documents is his "Commission", which names him as governor, and the others are called the "Letters Patent" and "Instructions" which give details of his duties, and actually outline for him the constitution of the colony which he is to govern. After he arrives in the colony he governs as he thinks best, although there are certain actions he may not take without the approval of

the British government. For instance, the budget, in which the colonial government estimates its expenses for the next year, cannot be approved by the governor alone, but must be sent by him to London for the approval of the secretary of state for the Colonies.

New laws passed in the colony must also be sent to London for approval. If a man is needed for the higher civil service in the colony (a new medical officer of health, perhaps, or an inspector of schools) the governor will report to London, and perhaps he will recommend a candidate, but it is the secretary of state in London who makes the decision. "Every mail day [in a colony] a collection of carefully chosen despatches is prepared by the Governor's direction or in the terms of his own drafts. Each despatch, having been sent over to Government House for the Governor's personal signature, is transmitted to the Secretary of State. Similarly by every mail there arrives in the 'Governor's bag' a collection of despatches containing the decisions and directions of the Secretary of State."

The secretary of state seldom *orders* the governor to do such and such, because it is usually best to trust the governor, "the man on the spot", to do what is possible; but he may do so. The British believe in leaving as much as possible to the man on the spot. Most of the colonies are thousands of miles away from Britain, and before the days of cables and wireless (Book Three) it sometimes took months for the governor to receive replies to the despatches he had sent to the secretary of state.

Obviously, in this situation, government of a colony had to be carried on from the local capital, not from Britain. Even to-day, when cables and wireless make contact with London much easier, and a man can travel by air in a day or two from London to a colony, it is the custom to carry on government from within the colony.

The governor has various officials to help him to carry on the administration. First comes his chief lieutenant, who is called the colonial secretary, or chief secretary. Then there are other officials in charge of the various departments of government. Since administration carries out much the same duties in all parts of the world the titles of the various secretaries in a colony are often much like the titles of the cabinet ministers in Britain, though their functions are very different. Cabinet ministers in Britain are responsible to parliament, officials in a colony are responsible to the governor, and the governor in his turn is responsible to the secretary of state for the Colonies in London.

There is no cabinet in a colony; instead the governor has an executive council to advise him. But in a crown colony system of government the governor need not take their advice, and he must act on his own responsibility. Some of the officials, especially the colonial secretary, the financial secretary, and the attorney-general or legal secretary, are members of the executive council, and often the governor nominates other members from among the local inhabitants. To take an example: in Trinidad, in the West Indies, the members of the executive council were,

in 1944, the governor, the colonial secretary, the attorney-general, the financial secretary, and five other men, all Trinidadians, whom the governor had nominated.

The law-making body in a colony is usually called the legislative council. When a law has been passed in a legislative council the governor sends it to the secretary of state in London for final approval. The legislative council usually meets once or twice a year for a few weeks in the capital of the colony in the Council Chamber. The governor sits at one end of the room and acts as chairman. On one side sit the officials who are members, on the other sit the other members who are local inhabitants and are either nominated by the governor or elected by the people. As the colony gets nearer to self-government more elected members are added, and the officials and nominated members are taken away, as happened, for example, in Ceylon.

In Trinidad the legislative council was first formed in 1831, when there were no elected members at all, but only six official and six unofficial members—that is, nominated from among the local people. Most of the people who lived in Trinidad were then negro slaves, but in 1833 they were given their freedom. Nearly a hundred years later, after the first World War, the people of Trinidad, who now consisted of negroes, Europeans, and immigrants from India, began to wish for some elected members to represent them in their legislative council. So in 1924 Britain granted a new constitution under which seven members were elected, six were nominated local

people, and twelve were officials. Then in 1941 the balance was changed, so that of the total nineteen, including the governor, nine were elected, three were officials and six were nominated by the governor from among the local inhabitants. By 1950 the legislative council had twenty-six members, of whom eighteen were elected, three were officials and five were nominated. So the slow process goes on by which the people take more and more part in making the laws. In Trinidad and such colonies as Jamaica and Malta, Britain has given up nearly all the power to the colonial people.

The practical test of self-government always comes when one answers the question, "Who controls the money-bags?" In most colonies the governor, and through him the secretary of state in London, still decides how the government money is to be spent. In England, parliament fought the king over the control of the revenues from taxation and other sources, and ever since then parliament has insisted on reviewing the government's finances every year, and voting supplies of money for the government's expenses only one year ahead (Part One). The same system of annual accounting has been adopted in the colonies.

The money which is spent by colonial governments is raised, as in Britain, mainly by taxes and loans. People in many of the colonies pay income tax; then there are customs duties from imported goods, and sometimes on exported goods also. In many parts of Africa there is also a poll tax, which is a tax paid by every adult man. Many

people in the colonies are miserably poor, and they cannot afford to pay much in taxes. Before the second World War the government of Jamaica had about £2 to spend each year for every person in Jamaica; Nyasaland had only 6s. 8d. At this time the British government was spending about £20 for every person in Britain, and the New Zealand government was spending about the same for every person in New Zealand.

As in Britain so in the colonies, the government makes estimates once a year of how much money it will need to spend in the next twelve months, and presents these estimates to the legislative council for discussion and approval. Wherever there are elected members, and members nominated from the local community, they take a great part in the discussions and often make important alterations which the government accept. The governor usually takes care, before he forwards the estimates to the secretary of state in London for approval, that he has the agreement of the unofficial members of the legislative council. The secretary of state in London has the final word in the control of most colonial finances, and so he can control government. As a territory becomes self-governing the control of finance passes to the elected representatives of the people. This has happened in Jamaica, which can be said to be self-governing in all matters of internal affairs.

Just as each colony has its own separate government, so it has its own system of courts and judges. The highest judge is usually called the chief justice and he is a very

important person who comes next after the governor in rank. He is, however, completely independent of the governor. In court and on state occasions he wears robes and a wig like an English judge. He presides at the high court or supreme court of the colony, which tries various types of cases, and hears appeals from the lower courts. If for a good reason the plaintiff is not satisfied with the verdict given in the highest court of the colony, he may appeal to the court of appeal for the group of colonies in his region, and from there to the highest court in the British Empire, which is the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London (Part One). Every year the Judicial Committee hears several cases from the colonies; the lists of cases and the verdicts can be found in the legal section of *The Times* newspaper. Sometimes the Judicial Committee has to try a case according to systems of law unknown in England. Cases from Ceylon, for instance, have to be tried under Roman-Dutch law, from Mauritius under the old French law.

Below the supreme court in the colony are lower courts. In large colonies where people cannot easily travel to the capital the judges regularly travel about "on circuit", as they do in England when they go to hold the assizes (Part One). There are also district courts presided over by judges; magistrates' courts; and native courts conducted according to native law and custom, usually with a chief or headman acting as magistrate.

The native chiefs and headmen also have an important share in local government. They and their councils carry

out many of the same functions as local government authorities in England. They repair the roads, install water supplies, keep the streets clean in the towns and, if they have enough money, run hospitals and dispensaries. As in England, they co-operate with the central government of the colony. Some of these local authorities, especially in the West Indies and in the big cities elsewhere, are formed like those of England by election and appointment into village councils, urban district councils, and city corporations. But in many parts of Africa, and in the Pacific, the British decided to give the functions of local government to the tribal authorities whom they found when they first took over control. These are called Native Authorities, or simply N.A.'s. A native authority may be a council of chiefs and headmen, or a single chief or magistrate acting by himself as the local government.

This is the story of how local native administration was restored on a Pacific island in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands colony after the occupation by the Japanese in 1942 and 1943. It is told in the official story of the Pacific Islands at war, called *Among Those Present*: "Major Holland, Director of Education and representative of the central government of the Colony went ashore at Abemama with the first American landing party in 1944. He had walked only a few yards along the road towards the nearest village when he met Tobinabina, a young Native Magistrate who was the Senior Government Officer on the island. At his approach the young Magistrate stood smartly to attention and Holland saw there



Holding a court in Kano, Nigeria

were tears trickling down his cheeks. He was wearing his thick leather belt with the huge brass buckle bearing a crown and the letters N. M. which was his only badge of office. Tobinabina had worn this belt on the day the Japanese had landed on Abemama. He said afterwards, 'I did not know what was going to happen to me but I wanted to be in British uniform just in case I never got the chance to wear it again'. The Japanese laughed at him, and told him he would have no further use for the belt, but Tobinabina hid it in the bush and waited for the day when he would wear it again. He also hid the Union Jack, which came out again the day Major Holland landed.

"Holland at once restored the island's Native Government, both in form and personnel. Of . . . Tobinabina . . . he wrote, 'I find his conduct during the whole time of the occupation to have been splendid. He attempted bravely to maintain the fabric of Government, by resisting every order foreign to the Constitution, and remained adamantly faithful to his office and to the service of the people. . . .' The Japanese . . . dismissed all civil servants and even ordered the burning of every record book. Native officials conspired to defeat this order and after the island had been liberated they were able to produce from various hiding places, the Cash Book, the Court Minute Book, the Births Register, the Deaths Register, the Record of Native Government Officials, the Lands Register, the Divorce Book, the Prison Register and the Bicycle Tax Book. One of their keenest regrets was that



Tobinabina

they had not managed to save the rain gauge and the rainfall returns! Tobinabina still held, and handed over to the proper authority, seven pounds of Government revenue."

Besides native authorities there is also in each district or province of a colony an official who represents the central government. He is very often a white man from Britain, and is known as the district officer, or district commissioner. He assists the native authorities with advice and guidance. Though usually a young man, the district officer is a very valuable person because to most people he is "the Government"; he is the only administrator they see; he talks to them in their own language and listens to their complaints. If he thinks their complaints are justified he takes the matter up with the local native administration, or the central government.

This is part of a song which was written by an African to express his admiration for a district commissioner in Basutoland:

Under his supervision we loosen our blankets,
Under his rule we taste no bitterness
Neither do we suffer any bites from lice.
The chief who is never angry,
The chief who rules peacefully,
The chief who is born to govern nations,
His words are as sweet as honey,
His motto is "Peace, goodwill and love."

In Britain men and women who want to enter politics usually begin by taking part in local government; in this way they learn something about the problems of adminis-

tration. In the colonies also the people learn first to govern themselves by taking part in local government. In many colonies the people now manage their own local affairs, with practically no assistance from outside. The time is coming when people capable of governing themselves in local affairs, will be able to control all the functions of the central government in their colony.

Chapter XII

The British in tropical Africa: East and Central Africa

Tropical Africa is that part of the African continent which lies between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, bounded on the north by the Sahara desert and on the south by what is now the Union of South Africa, a self-governing Dominion. In tropical Africa there are few Europeans; most of the inhabitants are Africans, but there are also some Indians who came in originally as labourers and traders. To-day a large part of the map of tropical Africa is within the British Empire. Most of this land has become British within the memory of our grandfathers.

In 1880 Africa within the tropics was still the Dark Continent, largely unexplored, with few roads and no railways (Book One). Most Africans lived in their villages untouched by the civilisation of Europe and unaware of the wonders of science or the mechanical inventions like railways and steamships which were changing the way of living of people all over the world. In some ways the

Africans lived a happy life in those days, but they suffered from three great evils. There was no way of dealing with accidents or sickness, for the African native doctors thought magic as important as medicine, and did not understand anything about scientific surgery or medical treatment; many people lost their lives or were disabled when clean bandages and medicines would have cured them. Another evil was tribal warfare; among the weaker tribes no man's life or property was safe, and whole villages would sometimes be wiped out, the houses burnt, the men killed, the women and children and cattle carried away.

Here is a verse of a song which was chanted when the spears were blessed before the warriors went out on tribal raids. This song belongs to the Lango tribe which lives to-day in Uganda.

O tree of blessing, our spears have watched the long night out
under thy shadow.

The shafts are wet with dew that shall soon run with blood.

The blades glint in the sun; its first rays tinge them to redness.

They flash to the Ancient One.

The dewdrops quiver with light: they glisten like spray from
a leaping fish.

Bless our spears, O holy ones:

Give us honour of battle, and to their women the tears of
widowhood.

Another even greater evil was slave raiding. Although the British and other European nations had been trying to stop trading in slaves since 1807, when the British first passed a law making it illegal for British subjects to

be slave traders, Arabs were still buying or capturing Africans and selling them into slavery in Arabia and other countries around the Red Sea.

Some time in the 1880's, an African boy was born in a village near Lake Nyasa in what is now the British colony of Northern Rhodesia. The story of his early life shows what it was like to live in Africa before the Europeans came. His father lived with his three wives and several children in a village of huts in the African bush near the river Musora. Around the village lay the millet fields where their food was grown; millet is rather like wheat. One day, when the boy was about nine years old, his mother was caught and eaten by a lion as she was going out to gather in the millet. There were no guns in the village, only bows and arrows, so it was difficult to kill the lion and protect the harvesters against other wild animals.

About three years later another tribe, called the Angoni, who were very fierce warriors, raided the village and carried the boy off to be sold into slavery. They killed his old grandmother and his little sister, burned the village and carried off as many of the cattle as they could find. The boy walked for miles with the Angoni along the bush tracks, for there were no roads, and was sold to an Arab slave dealer who took him to the east coast. Here he was put in a small boat and hidden under the cargo so that no one should see that the boat was carrying slaves. The boat sailed only at night so as to avoid being stopped by the British naval cruisers which patrolled this coast on the look-out for slavers. After two days they reached the

island of Zanzibar where the boy was sold for about £5 to a fat old woman called Bibi Zem Zem who owned a lot of land and coconut groves on the island. She gave him to one of her other slaves to bring up, and he was renamed Rashid Bin Hussani and converted to the Muslim religion. When Bibi Zem Zem died many years later he became a free man again, but by that time a great deal had happened to Rashid.

He had gone on several journeys, or safaris as they are called in East Africa, into Uganda, acting as a porter and carrying trade goods on his head for the European traders. Before the Kenya and Uganda railway was built in 1901 there was no way of carrying goods into the country except on men's heads. Horses and oxen could not be used because they died of disease, especially of the fever carried by the tsetse-fly (pronounced tsēt-tsē); this was before the days of motor-cars. Each journey into Uganda took a year. The porters were sometimes attacked along the way by warlike tribes who wanted to steal the goods for themselves, and did not like the Europeans penetrating into their country. Besides acting as porter Rashid also joined the army which the British raised in East Africa to keep order along the trade routes and along the frontiers of the British colonies.

By 1895 the Europeans had begun to open up East Africa. Trade was developing and governments were being established. In this part the Germans and the British had both taken over territory, the Germans in what is now Tanganyika, and the British in Kenya and

Uganda. In 1890 Britain, by an agreement with Germany, took over the control and protection of Zanzibar, whose sultan governed the islands of Pemba and Zanzibar and the coast-line opposite, near the great modern port of Mombasa. The British declared a protectorate over the sultan's territory, mainly to prevent the Germans menacing the trade routes in the Indian Ocean. The sultan still rules in Zanzibar and Pemba, with British advice and assistance. These islands are now the protected state of Zanzibar, and the sultan is like the Malay sultans or the Indian princes. His mainland possessions are now administered by Britain.

Uganda was suffering from terrible tribal warfare, so in 1890 a British expedition was sent under Captain Lugard, a great soldier and administrator who managed to establish law and order. At this time a company called the Imperial East Africa Company was responsible for developing and governing British East Africa. The British government had for many years been reluctant to take over control, but in 1894 Gladstone, then British prime minister, was with difficulty persuaded to take Uganda under British protection, and ever since it has been administered like a British colony. Some of the native tribes, especially the Baganda, have wide powers of self-government in local affairs under the system of local native administration. Captain, later Lord, Lugard himself developed this idea of using tribal organisations in Uganda to carry on administration; his system has been adopted in other parts of Africa.



THE BLACK BABY.

MR. BULL. "WHAT, ANOTHER!!—WELL, I SUPPOSE I MUST TAKE IT IN!!!"

Reproduced by permission of the proprietors of "Punch"

The route from the coast to Uganda lay through Kenya, much of which is high plateau country. Soon after the railway was opened it began to be developed as a British colony of settlement; the climate in the highlands is not hot, and white people can live there comfortably and grow European crops. Settlers arrived from Britain who began to take up large holdings as farms. They settled in parts of the country where there were no Africans, but as time went on the number of Africans in Kenya increased, and the amount of good vacant land available for farming grew less and less. Many Africans as well as white men prefer to live in the highlands, where the soil is good. It was decided to reserve some of the land for the Europeans, and some for the Africans. Indians are not allowed to own land in the highlands. They live mostly on the coast and in the towns.

Kenya is a difficult country to govern because it has three races—European, Indian, and African. After the first World War the Europeans in Kenya asked that they should be given the right of governing themselves as if they were a Dominion. The British decided not to give them dominion status, but to keep the administration of Kenya under their own control in order that they could safeguard the welfare of the Africans. In 1923 the government said that in the case of any clash of interests between the three races the interests of the native inhabitants, that is the Africans, should come first. Both the Europeans and the Indians elect representatives to the legislative council in Kenya, but so far the African representatives

have had to be appointed and not elected. In any case the legislative council does not control the government; as in any other crown colony, it has certain powers of passing laws, while the governor carries on administration under instructions from Britain.

After Rashid Bin Hussani had worked as a porter, a soldier, and a policeman in Kenya he settled down in Tanganyika, which is Kenya's southern neighbour. The British captured this territory from the Germans in the first World War, and after the war Britain was given the right of governing it by the League of Nations, under a mandate. When the United Nations Organisation took the place of the League after the war of 1939-1945, Britain was granted a similar right to govern Tanganyika under a trusteeship agreement.

Rashid never returned to the country of his birth, which is now Northern Rhodesia. British settlers came into this part of Africa from the south, from what is now the Union of South Africa. An Englishman named Cecil Rhodes, who was a leader in both business and politics in South Africa, had the idea of developing the land north of the Limpopo river, and he formed the British South Africa Company to carry out development (Book One). The whole of this area was named after Rhodes. At first it was administered by the Company as one unit, but when the British government took over responsibility after the war of 1914-1918, the country was divided up into Northern and Southern Rhodesia. There are white settlers in both countries, earning a living on the mines and on the farms.

To the east of Northern Rhodesia, bordering on Lake Nyasa, is Nyasaland. There are a few Europeans living here as settlers, growing tea and tobacco, but most of the people are Africans.

In the whole of the continent a great many Africans work for European employers, and nearly all Europeans earn their living with Africans to work for them. There are no mines or large towns in Nyasaland as there are in most other British territories in East and Central Africa. So the Africans often go on long journeys to find work. Africans are great travellers. They walk for days or even weeks on their way to the mines, camping sometimes by the side of the road, or working enough to earn their food on the farms or in the towns they pass through. Men from Northern and Southern Rhodesia and from Nyasaland are to be found in the mines of the Union of South Africa, and some of them go north to Tanganyika and Kenya, where there are also men from the Belgian Congo. These African labourers usually leave their wives and families behind them, and return to their villages in a year or so to live on their earnings. Sometimes they go away again when the money is all gone. This is a very unsettling way of living, and sometimes means that the men are more advanced in European ways of living than their wives who seldom leave their native villages. This is another problem which has been created with the bringing of western civilisation to Africa.

During Rashid's lifetime the whole of East Africa went through a great change with the coming of Europeans.

Where there were once only bush tracks there are now roads and railways; where there was the native doctor with his magic to heal the sick there are now hospitals and dispensaries. Africans are learning to read and write their own languages, although they were never written down before the white man introduced pens and paper.

But the white man has always found tropical Africa a difficult place to live in and develop. There are still not enough hospitals or schools or roads or good water supplies. Not enough Africans have been trained yet as doctors, as engineers, as motor mechanics, and irrigation experts. Far too many Africans still go hungry every year because the rains have failed, or the crops have been destroyed by a plague of locusts or some plant disease. A great deal remains for the British to do in Africa, although much has been accomplished since the opening up of the continent in the 1880's.

When Rashid told the story of his life to Mr. Baldock of the Forestry Department of Tanganyika in the 1930's, he was asked if the state of the people was better then than when he was a child. He replied:

"The best answer is the way I have just come from Moshi to Dar-es-Salaam [in Tanganyika] to see you: I have come with nothing but a stick and I shall return with nothing but a stick. I left my house and property in complete confidence, and I shall find it as I left it when I get back. When I was a child my father went to the shamba [fields] with his bow and arrows and took us with him; he dared not leave us even for a day for fear we

would be seized and sold as slaves. I have heard young fools complaining about tax, which they regard as oppression by Europeans, and saying that the old free state was better. It is true you were free to live where you liked and go where you liked, but it was much more a question of living where you could and going where you dared. I tell these people you may be inconvenienced by your tax every year, but it is better than finding yourself on the end of a spear or sold as a slave to be inconvenienced till the day of your death."

Chapter XIII

The British in tropical Africa: West Africa

On the west coast of Africa are four British territories which are also part of tropical Africa. These are the Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria. The people who live in these countries are negroes, who have black kinky hair and dark-brown skins. To a stranger they seem at first sight very much like the peoples of East Africa in appearance; although most East Africans are of different racial types, and are Bantus, speaking quite different languages. The negroes of West Africa differ a good deal among themselves. On the high plateau country, particularly in the north of Nigeria, there has been some intermarrying with the tribes of the Sahara desert, and there some people have lighter skins and narrow noses.

In these West African colonies there are more African towns and cities than in East and Central Africa. Some,



Bronze head of a negress from Benin City in Nigeria

like Ibadan (pronounced I-bád-an) and Lagos in Nigeria, are to-day as large as Bristol and Coventry. Some of these towns sprawl over the countryside; their streets are a maze of unpaved tracks, and there is no good system of drainage or water supplies. In the north of Nigeria, where the climate is dry and few trees grow, there are several walled towns built of sun-dried brick within which the people used to seek refuge in times of tribal warfare. The people of the north were more advanced than those of the south before the Europeans came. Most of them had been converted to the Muslim religion by the Arab conquerors of the Sahara. They wore, and most of them still wear to-day, flowing robes and turbans like the people of the desert, as can be seen in the picture on page 266. Their armies were fairly highly organised, but the tsetse-fly killed off their horses, and so they were prevented from penetrating to the coast and conquering the negro tribes of the coastal forest and rivers.

European travellers first came to this coast five hundred years ago, when the Portuguese went exploring in their search for the route to the East around the Cape of Good Hope. The English arrived a little later, and by 1700 had established a few trading-posts and forts at various places along the coast, such as James Fort (now Bathurst) on the Gambia and Cape Coast Castle on the Gold Coast, where they traded for ivory and gold dust and slaves. They did not establish settlements of British colonists because of the tropical fevers which killed off so many white men. There is an old saying that one must

Beware, beware, the Bight of Benin,
Few come out, though many go in.

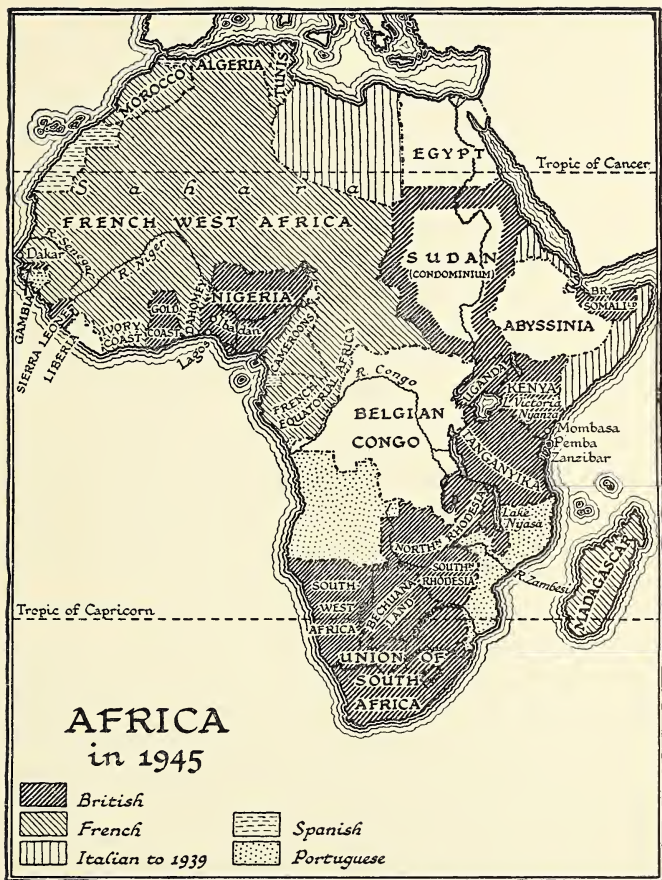
Along this coast in the eighteenth century the British traded for slaves who were sent to the sugar plantations in the West Indies and to the tobacco plantations in America. After 1807, when parliament passed the act which made the slave trade illegal, many of the British to be found along the coast were engaged in *suppressing* the slave trade. Sierra Leone was founded shortly before this time in 1787 as a refuge where liberated slaves could begin life again as free men. The British warehouses and trading-posts on the coast now turned their attention to other commodities, especially palm oil. Up to this time the British forts had been governed by the trading companies, but in 1843 the Gold Coast posts became a colony. Lagos, which is now the capital of Nigeria, became a British colony in 1862. But until after 1880 British influence did not extend very far inland, and primitive Africa remained undisturbed.

As in East Africa the trader and missionary came to West Africa long before the British government took any interest in developing the continent. Both trader and missionary came to Africa for definite purposes—the one to make money, the other to preach the Gospel and convert the heathen to Christianity. Each thought the other got in his way, and each at times accused the other of “spoiling” the African. But each brought something of his own western civilisation to the Dark Continent which helped to change ways of living in Africa. A great English-

woman named Mary Kingsley, who first went to West Africa in 1893, saw that both missionary and trader had something to give Africa. She travelled about, making friends with both missionaries and traders, penetrating into remote villages as a trader in cloth and beads, learning about Africa.

Before this time the science of tropical medicine had hardly been developed, and no way was known of preventing the frequent deaths from tropical diseases (Book Three). British expansion into the interior began about the same time as the development of tropical medicine. By 1900 the British had established protectorates over the upper Gambia river, the interior of Sierra Leone, Ashanti and the Northern Territories in the Gold Coast, and Northern Nigeria.

As in East Africa the British expanded mainly in order to prevent other European powers gaining control. France and Germany were the principal rivals to Britain. The French expanded from their trading-posts on the Senegal river; from Goree, near the modern port of Dakar on the Ivory Coast; and in Dahomey. To-day a great part of western Africa, including the great Sahara desert, belongs to the French Empire. The Germans made settlements in Togoland and the Cameroons, but these were captured from them in the first World War. After the war France and Britain were each granted a mandate by the League of Nations to administer half of each of these territories. As in the case of Tanganyika, the other mandated territory in Africa for which Britain is responsible, Togoland



and the Cameroons continued to be governed by Britain under the United Nations Trusteeship Council after the League of Nations was abolished in 1946.

The Germans developed their colonies by establishing a system of plantations or estates, where African labourers worked as employees of European managers. On these plantations the Germans cultivated oil palms or bananas or other crops suitable for export. This plantation system has been used by the British in East and Central Africa where Europeans manage sisal, tea, and coffee estates, but in West Africa the British decided that they would encourage the African peasants to grow their own crops on their own land, so there are very few plantations in the four West African territories.

These peasants often cultivate crops for export and sale abroad, and there is also a demand for crops to be used by other Africans in West Africa. In Nigeria the chief export crops produced by the Africans are palm oil and ground nuts (peanuts or monkey nuts). Both are sold in Britain and Europe to make soaps and cooking fats. In the Gold Coast cocoa is grown, and then sold to the United States, Britain, and certain countries in western Europe. The Gambia also grows ground nuts. Sierra Leone's chief exports are palm oil, iron ore, and diamonds. There are few European settlers or Indian traders in West Africa to make the political situation as complicated as it is in East Africa. In the west the Africans are developing their own land, and taking a larger share in their own government than in most of the East African territories.

When the British took over the interior of Nigeria in 1900 they sent for Major Lugard who had been so successful in establishing law and order in Uganda. He found a situation rather like that in Uganda when he first arrived. After he had pacified Nigeria he decided that local government would have to be entrusted to the local native chiefs, or emirs as they are usually called in Northern Nigeria, and their councils. Some of these emirs rule over large tracts of territory and hundreds of thousands of people. The emir of Kano, for instance, has over 2,000,000 subjects, and the sultan of Sokoto (pronounced Sockatoo) more than 1,000,000. In the south there were also large tribes, but here affairs were not so well organised, and Lugard and his successors had trouble at first in finding the local native chief or council with enough authority to carry on local government. This system of governing through the chiefs was called "Indirect Rule" by Lugard, but is now called "Local Native Administration". It has more recently been set up in the Gold Coast, the Gambia, and Sierra Leone. After 1930 the native authorities in Nigeria were strengthened and efforts were made to see that they spent their money wisely on modern improvements. By 1937 Kano, for instance, had a very good hospital, a system of roads, elementary schools, and a water supply carried through pipes to the main town, like a town in Britain. Altogether Kano was spending about £200,000 a year on local government.

A great deal more money is spent every year by the central governments of Nigeria, and the other three British

West African territories. They spend their money on such things as posts and telegraphs, railways, higher schools and colleges, and agricultural and forestry services. In the Gold Coast, which is the richest of the four territories, the amount of money from taxes which the Government could spend on its services increased enormously. Here are some facts which show the growth of revenue and of the value of exports from the Gold Coast.

	1912	1938-1939
Revenue . . .	£1,230,850	£3,780,288
Value of Exports . . .	£2,680,973	£11,558,859

These figures show that the people of the Gold Coast grew wealthier in the years between 1912 and 1938, for governments can only tax people according to their ability to pay. They grew richer mainly through selling more and more cocoa to the world. In 1913 the Gold Coast exported 50,000 tons of cocoa, but in 1938 exports had grown to 250,000 tons.

As the community grew wealthier it advanced in education and living conditions. In the towns and cities of all the West African territories an educated group of people grew up, some of whom had been to Britain for training as doctors or lawyers. These people were very often Christian, and had been to schools run by the missions. Many of them wore European clothes and lived in European houses, in circumstances quite different from those of the Africans in the villages in the bush. As was to

be expected, these educated Africans demanded some share in the government of their country. In 1924 in Nigeria and Sierra Leone, and in 1925 in the Gold Coast, these educated people in coastal areas were granted a small number of representatives in the legislative council to be elected by themselves. It was not thought possible at that time to arrange for the more backward places in the interior to be represented except by men appointed by the governor to sit in the council.

The next important stage in the development of government in these British West African territories came after the second World War. In 1946 a new legislative council was created in the Gold Coast on which for the first time in the history of tropical Africa there were more elected African members than members appointed by the governor. This meant that the elected Africans, if they agreed among themselves on a particular bill, could outvote the others, and control the legislative council. In 1949 a committee of Gold Coast Africans suggested reforms. So in 1951 the legislature was changed so that nearly all its members were elected, and some of them were chosen to be in charge of the principal Government departments. Their leader became known as Prime Minister. The governor still had the last word in what laws were passed, but in fact he did not interfere either in law-making or in the administration and Africans had now far more influence in government than ever before.

In 1946 arrangements were also made for a new constitution in Nigeria, which brought together representatives

from the emirates of the north, the teeming cities of the south, and the educated few who live like Europeans. In 1949 the people of Nigeria also discussed reforms, and in 1951 a new constitution was introduced which gave Nigerians control of the legislative council and placed Nigerians in charge of most of the Government departments. The time will probably come when these British territories in tropical Africa will be as much responsible for their own government as, say, Canada or Australia.

The development towards Dominion status is not going to be as simple in Africa as in the white Dominions. A great statesman, Lord Hailey, has said that political advance in Africa raises problems "for some of which we have no ready answer". What, he asked, are to be the relations of the European settlers in East Africa with the large African communities? How are countries to be self-governing where the people have no common ties or national feelings? Should African constitutions continue to be modelled on that of Britain, or should they find a pattern in African native life? The British people are faced with these questions when they think about Africa to-day.

Chapter XIV

Islands in three oceans

The British West Indies

The British West Indies lie along the Atlantic coast of Central and South America. They consist of Barbados,

Trinidad and Tobago, the four Windward Islands, the Leeward Islands, the Bahamas, Jamaica, and the two colonies of British Honduras and British Guiana on the mainland. To the north, more than a thousand miles away, is the small colony of Bermuda, which is not one of the British West Indies at all, but whose history has much in common with theirs. Bermuda is the oldest British settlement in the British Empire outside the British Isles, and some of the West Indian islands have been in the British Empire longer than any other part of the world. Barbados, for instance, which was founded in 1632, was a British colony when King Charles I had his head cut off, and it had been British for two hundred years when the great Reform Bill introduced the beginnings of modern democracy into Britain in 1832. So although the British West Indies are a very small part of the British Empire (there are only 2,000,000 people in these colonies) they are an interesting part, because they have been under British influence so long.

But Britain was not the first European country to take an interest in the West Indies. Sailing to these islands Columbus first discovered America. Columbus was an Italian in the service of the Queen of Spain, and it was the Spaniards who first explored and settled in these islands. The Spaniards tried to keep all other European nations away from their empire in the New World, but they did not succeed. First came the French corsairs and then the British buccaneers, who made lightning raids on the Spanish possessions, capturing ships with rich cargoes and

stores of gold, silver, spices, and dye-woods. Sir Francis Drake was one of these, a great sailor and a great leader of men, who is part of the British heritage of the sea.

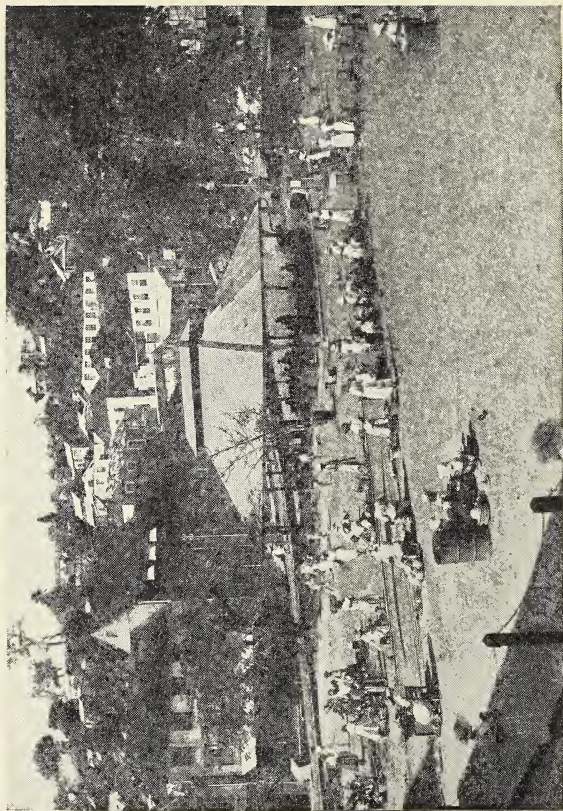
After the time of Drake, in the reigns of James I and Charles I, the British began to make settlements in the West Indies. By 1650 the islands had begun to grow sugar cane. Sugar was then a new luxury in Europe, fetching high prices. It was found that the growing of sugar needed to be done on a fairly large scale with numbers of labourers in the fields and in the boiling-house where the cane juice was boiled down into sugar. So the islands were settled by Englishmen who ran their large plantations or estates with gangs of negro slaves imported from Africa.

The adventurous Englishmen who emigrated to the New World and made their homes in the British West Indies took all the liberties, rights, and privileges of Englishmen with them. The English system of law was transported, and also the English system of government as in the thirteen American colonies which finally became the United States of America. The British West Indies had the same sort of troubles with Britain as the American colonies had before 1776, but the West Indies did not join in the American Revolutionary War, and they did not seek their independence. Later on, in the 1850's and 1860's, the form of government in most of the colonies was changed. But there are three colonies, Barbados, the Bahamas, and Bermuda, which still have the old-fashioned type of constitution like that of the thirteen American colonies before 1776. They are to-day practically self-

governing in their own affairs, but Britain has the right of interfering if she considers it necessary.

In the old days life in the islands was very pleasant for most of the white people. The negro slaves did all the hard manual work and acted as the servants. The wealthier people made trips to England, where they lived in style. "As rich as a West Indian" became a common saying. Most of the negro slaves, on the other hand, had a hard life. They had been forcibly seized in Africa and separated from their families. After a long march to the coast they were herded into small and crowded ships where some of them died. The ships brought them across the Atlantic to the West Indies and the southern American colonies where they were sold as slaves to the estate owners or planters. After the slave trade was abolished in 1807, the British people, led by men with a conscience like William Wilberforce, came to realise that slavery itself was wrong and that the slaves in the British colonies should be freed. Not only was slavery wrong, but it was also wasteful, for men do better work if they are free and working for themselves and not for their masters.

In 1833 the Emancipation Act was passed which freed all the slaves in all the British colonies and set aside £20,000,000 of the taxpayers' money to compensate the slave owners for their losses. So many of the free negroes left the estates to set up on their own small farms that the planters began to bring in East Indians, as they are called, from India to do the hard work in the fields. Owing partly to these troubles with their labourers, but mainly to



St. George's market, Grenada, West Indies

the keen competition from other sugar-cane-producing countries like Java and Cuba, and from sugar-beet countries like Germany and Austria, the West Indian planters found it difficult to make both ends meet, and some of them became bankrupt. Many of them left the islands, and those who remained were a different type, efficient, industrious, and hard-working. The days of big houses and great wealth had gone for ever.

With the downfall of the planter class came the downfall of the system of self-government which they had enjoyed. In some islands there were not enough white men left to carry on administration and government, and no one had thought of giving the negroes or East Indians any responsibility. So Britain took away the old-fashioned type of constitution, except in Barbados, Bermuda, and the Bahamas, and set up instead the type of crown colony government which she had given to her eastern and African colonies where there were no white people used to British ideas of government. Although there were several thousand white people left in the West Indies, it was possible at that time to think of those colonies, like Ceylon, as communities of people to most of whom British traditions and British ways of self-government were strange. But these negroes in the West Indies were no longer entirely Africans. They were no longer living under the tribal system, owing loyalty to their chief, with a sense of responsibility towards their own small community. Most of them were small peasant farmers or estate labourers, owing loyalty to no one except the occasional kind employer.

Britain sent out several wise men as governors to administer these new constitutions, men who realised how necessary it was to train the negro, to teach him to read and write, to improve his capacity to earn a good living, and to take a part in the life and government of the community. All these things still need to be taught in the West Indies, as in Britain and in other parts of the world, but to-day, more than a hundred years after the emancipation of the slaves, there are many West Indians as capable of earning as much, and of acting as leaders of men, as anyone in Britain. Some of these West Indians are white, some are negroes, and some are East Indian by race. They are all West Indians.

The West Indian negroes very soon began to wish for a British form of government in which they could share. A group told some visiting Englishmen in the 1880's that some form of representative government was the right of all British subjects, no matter what their colour. Slowly the people were given a share in their own government, by electing their own representatives to the legislative council. In 1945 Jamaica was given a type of constitution which was almost as self-governing as that of Ceylon. The administration of most local affairs is controlled by elected representatives of the people, and the British government has said it will not interfere except in cases of emergency. All the people of Jamaica, both men and women, who are over the age of twenty-one, are allowed to vote in the elections to their legislature. In the other colonies the share of the people in their own government is growing.

A visit to the West Indies would show clearly that the development of the British Empire does not produce other Britains overseas. These West Indian colonies are different from Britain although they are all proud to be British. Barbados likes to be called "Little England". Their law courts, their government, and their parish churches are like those in Britain, and from an aeroplane the fields look like the green fields of England. But the resemblance ends there. Their green fields grow sugar-cane; the people speak English, but with so strange an accent that it is sometimes difficult for an Englishman to understand them. Many of them have brown skins and crinkly hair, and are the descendants of negro slaves. A Barbadian is not an Englishman, but he is proud of his island and of his community, and proud of belonging to the British Empire.

Mauritius and the Seychelles

Mauritius and the Seychelles are islands in the Indian Ocean off the east coast of Africa. The British captured them in order to protect the sea routes to India during the wars with Napoleon. Before that time they had been settled by the French, who had imported negro slaves from Africa and who in Mauritius were growing sugar under a system like that of the West Indies. The story of Mauritius is very like the West Indian story. Their slaves were freed in 1833, and the planters brought in Indian labourers to do the work on the sugar estates which the free negroes were leaving. The French planter had no tradition of self-government, and the British governed the



A Fijian policeman on point duty

colony for many years under the crown-colony system, with the people having little or no part in administration. Since 1885, however, there have been a few elected representatives of the people in the legislative council, and after the second World War it was decided to give Mauritians a greater share in their own government. In the Seychelles the community is very much smaller, and only after the war was it suggested that the people should elect members of the legislature.

The system of law in Mauritius and the Seychelles is quite unlike that in Britain, for when the British captured the islands they allowed the people to keep their old French law. Their language, too, is still French, and their laws and newspapers are in French and also in an Indian language, so that the people can understand them. Like the West Indies, Mauritius has a mixed population, partly European, partly negro, and partly Indian. But the life of the community is more French than English.

Fiji and the Pacific Islands

Many of the people of the Pacific Islands are related to the Maoris of New Zealand. Others are darker skinned and look almost like Africans. When the British first came to the islands, in the days of Captain Cook, they found these people living in the Stone Age, for they had not learned about the use of metal for weapons and tools. The British came here as traders and missionaries long before they took over the islands and governed them as parts of the British Empire. It was not until 1874 that Fiji was

annexed, although the chiefs had asked Queen Victoria to take them under her protection several years before. Besides the Pacific Islanders there are also some white men living in these colonies, managing the coconut plantations or the gold mines. In Fiji there are also many Indians who came from India to work on the sugar estates.

For many years the simple people of the Pacific did not ask for any share in their government; but the British encouraged them to build up their own local governments, as the people in Africa were doing. Before the second World War it had become quite usual for a small island to be very efficiently governed by its own natives, helped by occasional visits from white officials from more important islands. Births, marriages, and deaths were recorded, taxes collected, roads repaired, and offenders against the law given fair trials according to the British custom throughout the British Empire. The time is coming when these people will be ready to take a more active part in the central government of their colony.

Besides Fiji, the British Empire in the Pacific includes Tonga, or the Friendly Islands, which are practically self-governing under their Queen Salote. Then there are the Solomon Islands, a battle-ground during the second World War, where the people are still very simple, and have learned little of British ways and customs. The Gilbert and Ellice Islands are all small in size, and lie across the equator. Here, too, the people faced the dangers of occupation by the Japanese enemy during the war.

The New Hebrides, further south, is ruled by France as well as Britain under what is called a condominium. Lastly, there is Pitcairn, a small island away to the east, which was settled about 1800 by mutineers from His Majesty's ship *Bounty* with their wives from Tahiti. Their descendants live there very peaceably to-day; it is among the smallest and most isolated of all the communities that make up the British Empire.

Chapter XV

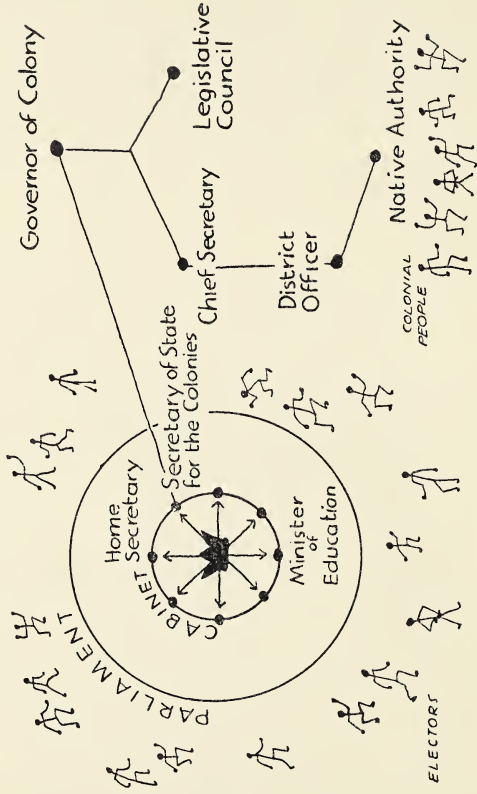
Britain and the Colonies

The Colonial Empire is such an important part of the responsibilities of Britain that there is a separate government department in London to deal with all the colonies, known as the Colonial Office. Its head is the secretary of state for the Colonies, who is a minister with a seat in the cabinet. Before 1925 this department used also to deal with the Dominions, but when it had become apparent that the Dominions were self-governing there was created a separate secretary of state for Dominion Affairs. Because Britain has no responsibilities for good government in the Dominions his work may be compared with that of the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs, who carries on relations with foreign countries.

For many years the Colonial Office has occupied a large building in Whitehall, the street in London in which are most of the government departments. The door of the

BRITAIN

A COLONY



The relationship between ordinary people in Britain and in the Colonies — 1945

Colonial Office is in Downing Street, opposite the prime minister's house at Number 10. After the end of the second World War the work of the Colonial Office had grown so much that they found this building too small, and the government decided to move the Colonial Office to a new building to be specially built for them in Parliament Square.

The business of the Colonial Office is to help the secretary of state to send and receive letters and despatches from the governors abroad, and to advise him when he has to take decisions on matters of policy. If the secretary of state for the Colonies should decide, after consulting the civil servants in the Colonial Office and the governor abroad, that a certain colony should have a new constitution, he will discuss it with the other members of the cabinet, who must all agree before the new constitution is introduced. The secretary of state, and his deputy, the parliamentary under-secretary of state, are members of the House of Commons or the House of Lords, who have been chosen for their posts by the prime minister to whose party they belong. When the prime minister and his party lose a general election and go out of office, the secretary of state and the parliamentary under-secretary of state go out of office with the rest of the cabinet, and new men are appointed by the new prime minister. The permanent civil servants of the Colonial Office, however, remain, no matter what government is in power. These men usually enter the department as young men, and work there until they retire, so that the older civil servants have had years of experience and often have travelled a great deal in the

colonies overseas. In the days when travelling was more difficult civil servants from the Colonial Office seldom went abroad, but now even the secretary of state occasionally manages to pay visits by air to overseas territories to see conditions for himself. This gives him a very much better idea of problems abroad than he could get from only reading despatches or talking in London to governors on leave.

The secretary of state for the Colonies, or Colonial Secretary as he is sometimes called, must answer for his colonial policy in the House of Commons, where he is often asked questions by members of parliament about colonial affairs. Once a year, usually in June or July, he gives a review of his policy in the colonies to the House of Commons, so the people of Britain and their representatives in parliament are able to keep in touch with what is going on in the colonies. Sometimes a few members of parliament go off to see the colonies for themselves.

The connection between the people of Britain and the people of the colonies can be shown in a diagram, as on page 302.

One of the duties of the Colonial Office is to recruit young men and women from Britain to enter the colonial civil services, and serve as government officials in the colonies. As the countries overseas become more capable of managing their own affairs, more of their civil servants are local people. But in the early days of British rule there were no local men who had enough training to administer the various government departments. Even in the early days it was possible to find or to train local men to act as

post-office workers, railway porters, and dispensers in the hospitals. But for a long time it was not possible to find local men with the experience and training for the posts of postmaster-general, chief superintendent of railways, medical officer of health, or colonial treasurer, and so men had to be found in Britain.

To-day, however, many of the colonial territories are recruiting only a few men in Britain. This is true, for example, of the West Indies. But in Africa the European is still needed in all fields of administration. In other parts of the world it is mainly highly qualified scientists and professional men who will be needed from Britain in the future.

When a man is accepted for work overseas he enters the service of a government overseas who pays his salary and his pension when he retires. He is usually moved about, and serves in one colony after another, spending about five years in each one, so that he has a wide experience. If he is a capable administrator he may, at the end of his service, become a governor—the highest rank in the colonial civil services.

The sending of well-qualified men and women to help in the government of the colonies is one important way in which Britain can help the colonies. Another way is by training colonial students here in Britain. At technical schools and colleges all over Britain there are young men and women from the colonies, mainly from Africa and the West Indies, who are learning to be engineers, doctors, nurses, teachers, and lawyers. These men and women will



An African nurse in training in Britain

go back to their own homes in the colonies when they have finished their training in Britain, and take up work among their own people.

Training people in Britain and sending out civil servants to introduce good administration into outlying areas costs money. Most of the civil servants in the colonies have their salaries paid out of the taxes raised in the colonies; this makes each colony self-supporting. But most colonies are very poor compared with Britain, and it became obvious that more men and more money would be needed than could be provided by the colonies themselves. So in 1940 the British government decided that it would give money raised from the British taxpayer to help in the development and welfare of the colonies. Parliament passed an act called the Colonial Development and Welfare Act which allowed the government to spend money for the colonies on such things as training colonial students in Britain, as well as on new roads and new school buildings. Before this Act was passed all the colonies were expected to pay for improvements out of their own taxes, and since they were very poor, development towards a higher standard of life did not go on fast enough. Now that the British taxpayer is helping to pay for development in the colonies we can expect to see improvements sooner than would have been possible under the old system.

As chapters in this book have explained, Britain is responsible for good government in most of the colonies, and the colonial peoples are not yet governing themselves. This means that the colonial peoples are ruled by

strangers, and there is something unnatural about this method of government. When the British first took over parts of the world overseas they, like other European Powers, thought only of how their rule would benefit their own country. But later they began to think of how it would benefit the native inhabitants. Gradually there arose the idea that Britain was a trustee for the welfare of these native inhabitants, who for some reason or another were not governing themselves, and that Britain would give up her position as trustee when these people became self-governing.

The word "trustee" is an English legal term which describes a person who is acting as guardian for someone who is too young to manage his own affairs. His affairs and his property are managed "in trust" by the guardian, who hands it over intact to the young man when he grows to manhood. The word has also been used in government for many centuries. Edmund Burke, a great champion of liberty (Book Five), first used the expression "trustee" in talking about the Empire in 1787 in a debate in the House of Commons on India. Burke disapproved of the conduct of the British administrators in India, and he said that Britain, acting through these administrators, should regard herself as a "trustee" for the Indian people. As the years went on, the idea spread that the British administrators abroad should have the welfare of the native inhabitants at heart. Their actions did not always follow their ideas, but the British had very good intentions, and they tried to redress wrongs and remedy abuses.

After the war of 1914-1918, when statesmen were deciding the principles on which the former German and Turkish colonies should be governed, they drew up the following guide for the administration of peoples not yet able to stand by themselves as independent:

There should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation. . . . The tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who, by reason of their resources, their experience, or their geographical position, can best undertake this responsibility.

This is the principle of trusteeship which has been slowly evolving in the British Empire.

At the end of the second World War in 1945 the United Nations decided that these principles should be adopted by all nations administering colonies. Chapter XI of the United Nations Charter contains this paragraph:

Members of the United Nations which have, or assume responsibilities for the administrations of territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government recognise the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of these territories are paramount, and accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to the utmost . . . the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories.

It is this principle which the British have been trying to carry out in the colonies.

Chapter XVI

Britain and the Empire

Britain has been carrying on the business of empire-building for many years, and over the centuries the British have worked out not only methods of government for peoples living thousands of miles away across the world, but also ways of thinking about the problems of empire. Ideas have played a part in the growth of the British Empire as well as armies, ships, and commodities like cotton goods and tea.

The question is often asked, "Why did the British establish an Empire?" There is no one simple answer. Trade is one important reason. It is sometimes said that "trade follows the flag", and that, therefore, if the British wanted to buy and sell overseas they should have extended their Empire to include people they wanted as customers. But it would be truer to say that "the flag follows trade". What usually happened was that at first the British went into a strange land to trade, where they set up a "factory" or trading-post. If the government of the country was strong, the British extended their trade, but the country remained independent. This is the story of British relations with Argentina, with China, and with Turkey. But if the government of the country was weak, the British usually found that they could not trade without British protection. The army and navy would be called in, and sooner or later Britain would take over responsibility

for government. This is the history of the British in India, in West Africa, and in Malaya. The British interest in trade made the great Napoleon call Britain "a nation of shopkeepers". But he found that this nation could also defend itself and prevent him from becoming master of the world. Out of the shopkeeping has grown the British Empire.

Another reason for the expansion of the British Empire was the search for new lands where British people might settle. It may seem strange now, when people are worrying about the *decrease* in numbers of the British population, that several times in Britain's history people have worried about the *increase* in the population, and have looked for new lands across the seas where the surplus population could be sent. This happened in the 1640's and in the 1830's. In the first period the colonies of settlement in America were founded; in the second the colonies in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Before religious toleration was established in England, men also crossed the seas to find homes where they could worship God as they pleased. So were the colonies in New England and Maryland founded (Book One).

The British also extended their rule in order to protect places which they already controlled, or in order to prevent other European nations from establishing themselves first. This is why the British conquered Quebec, why they took over the whole of India, and why they established their rule in Central and Eastern Africa within the last hundred years. In the first two cases they were rivals of the French; in Africa their chief rivals were the Germans.

There are also the many islands and fortresses scattered over the Empire which the British took for strategic reasons, to protect the sea routes in time of peace as well as in time of war. This is why the British captured Gibraltar in 1704, occupied Aden in 1839, and took over Malta in 1815.

A few places came into the Empire for none of these reasons. Sierra Leone, for instance, was first taken over by the British in 1787 to form a home for freed slaves. It was not until later that the defence uses of the harbour at Freetown became apparent. Not until the second World War was it used as an important naval base for the protection of the shipping routes in the Atlantic.

The British Empire is sometimes called "a maritime empire", or "a sea empire", because it was founded along the ocean routes of the world. Britain is an island, and the first men who went off to seek new lands for the crown of England were sailors. Ships were the messengers between Britain and the Empire overseas—ships which carried men and goods as well as mails. The Royal Navy protected these ships on their voyages and made it possible for the British Empire to remain united when enemies arose to threaten its existence. Napoleon tried without success to defeat the British Empire; so did Kaiser William II in the first World War of 1914–1918, and so did Hitler and the Japanese in the war of 1939–1945 (Book Five). In peacetime we do not think of danger to our sea communications from an enemy, but we should not forget that if we want to travel to Canada, Australia, or New Zealand from

Britain we should go by an ocean route. Even if we travelled in an aeroplane we should have to cross the seas, although we might also travel over continents. As long as the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force can keep open the sea routes between Britain and the countries overseas the defence of the Empire can be safeguarded.

Britain has helped to change the ways of living and thinking of people all over the world. On the whole, the lives of these people have changed for the better. The British have helped to develop countries overseas, so that wheat grows in Australia, where before no food was grown. Hospitals in great Indian cities heal the sick, where before men died for want of modern medicine. In Africa the water supplies are beginning to be clean. But perhaps more important are the changes going on in men's minds. In Africa men and women are learning to read and write so that they can find out for themselves more easily what is going on around them, and in other parts of the world.

Britain has always believed in giving the peoples overseas liberty to develop in their own ways, and she has not tried to impose a British way of life on the peoples abroad. Even people in the Dominions, who live very much like people in Britain, have their own ways of doing things, which they have worked out for themselves.

The people of Britain see in the British Empire overseas a great variety of peoples, languages, and customs. We think first of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa—four other nations which, like Britain, now govern

themselves. The people of these countries are, many of them, related to us, perhaps our second or third cousins, for their grandfathers were born and brought up in Britain. There are also others, like the Dutch of South Africa and the French of Canada, who are not related to us, but whose ways of living are like ours, and who have the same sort of government as we have. With the people of these countries we in Britain work freely and on an equal basis for the common welfare of the whole Empire and of the world. It is because we have so many common interests and ideals with these countries that the British Commonwealth could be created. The British Commonwealth is an association of free peoples, in which the member nations are all "equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another", yet "united by a common allegiance to the Crown".

The British people think next of the peoples of the East, some of whom have become member nations of the British Commonwealth. Many of these peoples have not wished to remain within the British Empire, for their ways of living are different from Britain's, and, unlike the Dominions, they do not belong to western, or European, civilisation. Yet their close relations with Britain, sometimes as part of the British Empire, has brought great changes to these peoples, and on the whole have improved their ways of living, and given them new ideas about how men can live together and help one another. Many of the eastern peoples, when they have felt themselves oppressed by British rule or control, have declared that they hated

Britain and British Imperialism. But where Britain has acted wisely, and handed over control to the local people as soon as they are ready to govern themselves, friendly relations have usually been established. The people of Britain still have something to do in the East to improve the standards of life, although they may have ceased to be the power responsible for good government. A wise American has said:

We of the West should not attempt to impose our form of government or our way of life on the East; nor should we measure their standards of living by our chosen yardsticks. In fact there are certain realms in which the slow-plodding peasant or the freedom-loving nomad has much to offer to the hurried Westerner. At the same time we believe, and they know when they have an opportunity to express themselves freely, that a degree of literacy is the right of every man and the beginning of general enlightenment; that the tilling of one's own soil is a powerful motivating force; that widespread suffering from preventable disease is not an inseparable part of human existence. It should be the combined responsibility of the more privileged Powers of the world, during the next era of peace, to give unfailing support to these basic concepts.

General enlightenment, as this American has said, will help to raise standards of living, but it will also bring new hope and new ideals to men who remain ignorant of the great thinkers of the past as long as they cannot read. Men have always learned from the experience of others, and so by passing on to the people of the East the best of European ways of living and thinking, we in the West can help towards their general enlightenment.

If this is Britain's duty towards the eastern peoples, it is also her duty towards the peoples of the British colonies, for whose good government Britain is still responsible. Every person in Britain can take an interest in the welfare of the colonial peoples, for through our government and the secretary of state for the Colonies we are endeavouring to help the colonials towards higher ideals and a higher standard of life. We are assisting the colonies to help themselves towards clean water, hospitals, self-government, schooling, and general enlightenment. Because we believe so much in the benefits of our own system of government we are inclined to take a great deal of interest in political development in the colonies. But, after all, good government is only a means to obtaining a good life. More than two hundred years ago Dean Swift wrote "that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together". The colonies need more corn and more grass as well as more schools and more self-government if they are to achieve higher standards of living and thinking. People in Britain can help them to get what they need.

If, as one of the more privileged nations of the world, Britain continues to help in introducing new ways of living and thinking to other peoples across the seas, then the British Empire has not been founded in vain, and the British people can be proud of their share in its building.

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COMPACT STORAGE



THE BRITISH



Dominions



Colonial territories



Trust territories



EMPIRE at end of 1947

(This map is drawn on Lambert's Equal-area Azimuthal Projection)

JN 121 F52 c.1

Firth, Catherine B.

The growth of British democrac

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